The Right Use of an ESTATE.

BRIEFLY

DIRECTED and URG'D,

IN A

SERMON

Lately Preacht to a Person of Quality, upon his coming to be of Age.

By *THEOPHILUS DORRINGTON.*

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To the Right Honourable, John *Earl of* Kildare, *and Baron of* Ophalia.

My Lord,

THoſe whom the indulgent Providence of God has favour'd with great Riches and Honours, as it has your Lordſhip, are under a great neceſſity to have their minds well accompliſht with Vertue, Wiſdom and Piety. No man can uſe an high Fortune well, to his comfort and honour in this life, or his happineſs in the next (which in ſome meaſure depends upon this too), but he that is a wiſe and good man. The more of theſe outward things any perſon has in poſſeſſion, the greater degrees of inward endowments are neceſſary to direct him in the uſe of them; for greater ſervice to God, and more good to men, is expected by the Donor from him: and he is expoſed to the more and the ſtronger temptations to evil. Great Fortunes are like mighty Engines, which if they are wiſely and carefully managed, will perform great and uſeful effects: But if not, inſtead of ſerving their end, they may daſh out the brains of him that uſes them. They uſually ſerve to make men the beſt, or the worſt of Mankind; either the moſt glorious inſtances of Vertue and Religion, or the moſt enormous ſinners.

To ſome unhappy men that want theſe inward Endowments, their great Poſſeſſions are only the Inſtruments of wickedneſs: They ſerve to gratifie and cheriſh fooliſh and hurtful Luſts. So the Poſſeſſors of them become the ſlaves of ſin, and miſerable Captives to the Devil. The miſtaken men, groſly impoſed upon by his ſubtil and malicious arts, are brought into a ſordid and pernicious bondage, whilſt they fancied themſelves enjoying an uncontrolled liberty.

Thus alſo theſe men unfit themſelves for all good and heroick enterprizes and performances: They blaſt their own glory, and interrupt and prevent the praiſe and renown which they might obtain. It is often their fate to ſee themſelves neglected as uſeleſs, whilſt meaner perſons, better accompliſht, and more fit for great truſts, are preferred to them.

Such men ſpend a few years in a wild extravagant jollity, having the moſt of their pleaſures forced, and ſo the leſs pleaſant: And the reſt of their days they commonly waſt, perhaps in ſhame and poverty; ſometimes in pain and ſickneſs too; and with theſe, under the laſhes of an angry Conſcience. And if that becomes ſo ſtupid and hard, as to ſcruple nothing that is wild and wicked, they make the more haſte to a miſerable death, and hurry to an endleſs perdition.

Thus

Thus Riches become the hurt of the owner for whom they are kept, which was one of the Vanities that *Solomon* long ago obſerved in the World. And ſurely a great one it is, that a man ſhould make himſelf miſerable by thoſe things that might yeild him comfort in this life, and ſubſerve his eternal happineſs: That he ſhould thus defeat all the wiſe care, and tender kindneſs of thoſe friends that gather'd, or preſerved his Riches for him. 'Tis a ſad and deplorable thing, to ſee men throw away the happineſs which they might enjoy, and wilfully run into thoſe miſeries that might be avoided. But I hope, and heartily wiſh for a better fate to your Lordſhip, to whom I account my ſelf much obliged, and to whom therefore I am very deſirous to be in ſome way ſerviceable.

My Lord,

It was to aſſiſt your Lordſhip, as well as my weak abilities could, upon your lanching into a dangerous World, your own Pilot, that you might not thus make ſhipwrack of a good Conſcience, a good Reputation, a large Eſtate, and a noble Soul, that I firſt compoſed this Diſcourſe, and delivered it in your hearing. And for the ſame purpoſe I do now, upon the deſire of ſome of your Lordſhips very Honourable Relations, humbly preſent it thus again. If it is in it ſelf ſuch as may be ſerviceable towards Piety and Vertue, it may now

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be the more ſerviceable to your Lordſhip, having this advantage, that it may be deliberately conſider'd, and the reaſon and importance of the Rules it contains, may be better diſcern'd, than from a tranſient delivery. I preſume it will be acceptable to your Lordſhip's Prudence in this publick way, if it be uſeful to ſo honeſt and good a deſign, both for your own, and other mens ſakes, who, with your Lordſhip, may receive ſome advantage thereby. And I humbly conceive it will be acceptable alſo to your Lordſhip's great and condeſcending Goodneſs, as a Teſtimony of my unfeigned deſire of your Lordſhip's Honour and Intereſt; and my thankfulneſs for the great Obligations which your Lordſhip has been pleaſed to lay upon,

My LORD,

Your Lordſhip's moſt Obedient,

Affectionate, and Humble Servant,

THEOPHILUS DORRINGTON.

PRE-

PREFACE to the RICH.

Gentlemen,

TO apply a helping hand towards the reformation of a prophane and licentious Age, is an act of Charity, like that of endeavouring to quench a raging fire. Vice and wickedneſs, like that devouring Element, ruin the private Families where they are entertained; and when they break out upon the publick, and become general, they turn all the glory of a Nation, into the aſhes of confuſion, if a general reformation does not prevent. And you are the perſons as from whom our Vices, and our Ruin do ever chiefly flow (pardon the ſevere truth): ſo alſo at whom we muſt always begin effectually to reform. Whatever elſe may be imputed to me for thus joyning my endeavour towards this, I hope you will alſo impute a good will and love to my Country, and ſuffer that, in your opinion, to expiate the reſt.

There are Two things the uſual cauſes of your miſcarriage and ruin: one is the want of an early government of deſire; the other, the inſinuations of flatterers.

Becauſe thoſe that are rich, have a large ability to gratifie their deſires, they are apt to indulge theſe; to let them run without due controul and reſtraint: and ſo their Riches prove a temptation and incitement, as well as an inſtrument of wickedneſs. For ungoverned deſires will ſoon grow extravagant and unlawful, and then puſh men to unlawful practiſes. Unleſs you are accuſtomed to early and reſolute denials of concupiſcence, to moderate your very deſires by the Rules of Religion, you are in a dangerous likelihood to fall into the worſt degrees of folly and wickedneſs. What men do at firſt allow themſelves but to deſire, intending to ſtop at wiſhes, that in a little time they commonly proceed to practice. And from leſſer ſins in practice, they proceed to greater, one ſin making way for another.

But there is nothing that you who are rich and great, are more expoſed to, than flattery; nor can any thing be more fatal and miſchievous, than that uſually is, if you have not a great deal of wiſdom to defend you from the miſchief of it. Flatterers are a ſort of Vermine which the poor are happily free from: They moſtly haunt the houſes of the rich; and eſpecially thoſe where a great Fortune is, under the management of an unthinking head, or ſtrong vicious inclinations. Where ſuch a carcaſs is, thither will theſe Eagles be gather'd: There they obtain the eaſieſt admittance; they have greateſt ſucceſs, and do the moſt miſchief. This worſt ſort of men, while they pleaſe an eaſie perſon, by raiſing and maintaining in him a high, tho groundleſs conceit of himſelf, obtain to be reputed great friends, and the honeſteſt, kindeſt men of his acquaintance. They ſet themſelves only to applaud and commend, to extenuate the groſſeſt Vices, and put the names of Vertues on the leſſer that are in him they flatter; to repreſent whatever little and defective goodneſs there is in him, as perfect and eminent. Thus they hinder him that is ſo unhappy as to give them regard, from all endeavour to improve in goodneſs, or to amend what is amiſs. A true friend would always pleaſe by commending; but if he ſees reaſon for the contrary, he will ſometimes reprove, tho it ſhould diſpleaſe, rather than do harm to him he loves, or than not endeavour to do him good. It was an argument of great wiſdom in Ageſilaus (which Xenophon reports of him), That he was always wont to receive kindly the com-

mendations and applauſes only of thoſe who he had obſerved would upon ſome occaſions reprove and blame him. He well knew and conſider'd, that no man can always deſerve to be commended; that the very beſt are not without ſome defects and errors. A wicked flatterer (and wicked ſuch men moſt commonly are) will urge you to the gratifying inferior and wicked appetites; he takes the part of Vice againſt right Reaſon and Vertue. He will encourage you in the ſins you are inclined to, and ſtrive to juſtifie them, and harden you againſt the checks of Conſcience. Such an one is alſo uſually very officious and ſerviceable to any wickedneſs, to aſſiſt and contrive for the commiſſion of it, and then to hide and conceal it: But in things that are good and brave, in the projects of Vertue, he is not forward to be imploy'd. He will perhaps induſtriouſly tempt a man to ſome ſin wherein he can aſſiſt, that himſelf may be the more neceſſary, and may get the more by the curſed imployment.

Behold, Reader, how young and rich perſons are led to their ruin! By theſe arts do miſchievous flatterers allure weak men into their power, and under their government, either to make them a prey to their avarice or neceſſity, or elſe a Tool to their crafty and wicked deſigns. Thus it often comes to paſs, that a great Eſtate, which might be uſed with a great deal of honour, and after left to Poſterity, is waſted upon the ſcum and abject part of mankind; upon Pimps, Bawds, Whores, Players, Fidlers, and Buffoons: A Tribe ſcarce fit to be named in theſe Papers, much leſs to be the ordinary companions of Nobility and Gentry. 'Tis impoſſible that any man ſhould live in good repute, or illuſtrate his life with any great and vertuous actions, who gives himſelf up to the conduct of ſuch vile wretches as have no Vertue nor Honour.

Now to prevent the miſchievous effects of theſe Two cauſes, Every man muſt know, how duty to God obliges him to behave himſelf in the uſe of his gifts: He muſt be convinced what is for his true intereſt, and what it becomes him in point of true honour to do in this matter, to obtain approbation from God and good men. He muſt alſo be perſwaded, ſo to deſire, and ſo to practiſe. This (Reader) I have endeavour'd to ſuggeſt in the following ſheets. I have given you in the ſeveral parts of the Diſcourſe, by piece-meal, I think almoſt a perfect character of the pitiable and lamentable Object, a debaucht Gentleman; and alſo on the contrary, that of one well accompliſht with thoſe great and true Ornaments that illuſtrate a high Birth and Fortune. I muſt leave the Reader to chuſe which he likes beſt, tho I have endeavour'd to perſwade him to that which is ſo.

I intend not to trouble the Reader with Apology for any defects or failings in the Diſcourſe; not becauſe I think it needs none, but becauſe I judg it would be vain and uſeleſs. Whatever real defects it has, it would be ſaid they ought to have been amended, not excuſed. And all the Apology in the World, cannot prevent, but there would be many ſeeming ones, becauſe of the many different apprehenſions and opinions of men. This I am ſure of, That whoever are inclin'd to find fault, they would do it after all the excuſes that could be made; and ſuch as are candid, and inclin'd to favour me, will over-look and pardon the defects, and ſatisfie themſelves with what is good and uſeful. And they *will excuſe me to themſelves and others.*

1 COR. VII. 31.

And they that uſe this World as not abuſing it, for the faſhion of this World paſſes away.

THE great God who was the Creator of all things, is the ſupream Diſpoſer and Governour of all. 'Tis his Providence that diſtributes to every perſon in the World that portion of preſent goods which he enjoyes; and he has appointed Rules, according to which every man ought to govern himſelf in the uſe of that Portion. Creation gives him an unqueſtionable right to Government, and we are indiſpenſably oblig'd to obey him that made us. We are further obliged to obey him in the uſe of preſent enjoyments, becauſe they are all his Gifts; who can have more right in all things to rule us, than he from whom we derive our being, and all that we enjoy?

Further, 'tis as neceſſary as it is juſt and equitable, that ſome Rules ſhould be given men in this affair: For how wild and extravagant are they that only follow the dictates of ungovern'd inclination; they live as without God in the World, they forget all the obligations of gratitude and homage to him; they are uſeleſs at leaſt to Mankind, fit for no good or great employment; they apply themſelves to nothing that is good, but follow their own Pleaſure; to gratifie their exorbitant Luſts, they will ruine the Innocent, grind the faces of the Poor, rob any that they can of their juſt Right by fraud or violence, they will deſpiſe the limitations of the Laws of men, and

good order, which are the ſtrength and glory of Communities: The unlimited obedience to inclination and appetite, has been the overthrow of mighty Kingdoms, it has been the ruine of ancient and flouriſhing Families; it has often brought particular perſons from greatneſs, riches and proſperity, to a contemptible meanneſs, a miſerable Poverty, to painful Diſtempers and a haſty Death.

Nor is the Remedy in this caſe provided, worſe than the Diſeaſe: The Rules preſcribed are as excellent and good in themſelves, as they are juſtly and neceſſarily preſcribed; they tend directly to prevent theſe miſchiefs and Calamities, without having any tendency to cauſe other, without impoſing upon us any thing that is unbecoming or truly prejudicial. The rules that God has given are certainly the fitteſt for us, they enjoin nothing unnatural, for they are adapted by Infinite Wiſdom; They are, we may aſſure our ſelves, as indulgent to us, as they can be and be good; they prohibit nothing but what is hurtful; they cannot be ſuppoſed to confine the uſe of Gods gifts within too narrow and needleſs limits, becauſe they are enjoined by infinite Goodneſs. 'Tis inconſiſtent with that goodneſs which has beſtowed theſe things on Mankind for uſe and delight, to hinder him by any rules from uſing and delighting in them ſo far as is good and convenient for him: Upon which accounts it becomes every man to endeavour, firſt, to know the rules by which God expects he ſhould guide himſelf in the uſe of his enjoyments; and after that to obſerve them.

This Verſe that I have read, is part of a ſentence which begins at the 29*th*. Verſe of the Chapter; which is an exhortation to men, to regard with great indifferency the things of this preſent Life: *It remains* (ſayes the Apoſtle) *that they which have Wives, be as thô they had none; and they that weep, as thô they wept not.; and they that rejoyce as thô they rejoyced not; and they that buy, as thô they poſſeſſed not; and they that uſe this World, as not abuſing it.* Let not your Paſſions be much moved by any thing here, that you may not abuſe it while you enjoy

enjoy, nor be uneaſie with diſcontent or grief for the loſs or want of it. And he begins and cloſes the ſentence with a fit argument to enforce the Exhortation, *The time is ſhort, and the faſhion of this World paſſes away*; as if he ſhould ſay, 'Tis but a little while that we ſhall live in this world, and all things here are lyable to change, there is no Condition but is of uncertain continuance, whether it be proſperous or adverſe. Therefore let all men keep themſelves as indifferent to theſe things as they can, and endeavour to uſe wiſely and innocently whatever Portion God beſtows on them while they enjoy it.

Theſe words afford to our Meditation this inſtruction.

It ought to be the Care of all perſons to make a regular and good uſe of thoſe outward enjoyments which the Providence of God affords them.

The following Diſcourſe on this, I ſhall divide into theſe two parts.

1. *To ſhow you how a man may uſe this World, ſo as not to abuſe it.*

2. *To illuſtrate the motives to this, that are included in the Apoſtles argument, that the faſhion of this World paſſes away.*

To know in the firſt place wherein the right uſe of theſe things does conſiſt, let us obſerve that ſummary of every mans Duty which the Apoſtle layes down under Three Heads in 2 *Tit.* 12. where he directs men to live *ſoberly*, *righteouſly* and *godly* in this preſent World: Thus ought we to guide our ſelves in the uſe of what we enjoy, to take care that we do not contradict in this, that reverence and pious homage which is due to God; nor that Juſtice and Good-will towards other men, which we may deſire to find in their carriage towards us; nor that good and wiſe Government which beſt becomes, and is moſt advantageous for our ſelves. Theſe three Heads include all the rules that are to be obſerved in this matter, I ſhall therefore under theſe range them.

1. *He that would rightly uſe his Portion in this Life, muſt not ſuffer himſelf to be tranſported thereby to the neglect or contradiction of thoſe Duties of Piety which he owes to God:* Which includes theſe following Rules:

(1.) *Take heed that you do not love your preſent Enjoyments more than God:* This is actual abuſe of them, as well as it diſpoſes us to further abuſe, for they were never made nor beſtow'd to draw our chiefeſt Affection to them; God is our chiefeſt good, and does deſerve the higheſt Intereſt in our Affections: He has made the mind of man capable to Contemplate and admire himſelf, to Love him and apprehend his Love to us, and be delighted therewith; to place then the chief affection of ſo noble a being upon any thing below the Supream good, is to abuſe both that and our ſelves; 'tis to content our ſelves with that low thing as our Happineſs, which was never intended to be ſo, and is in its nature unfit for it.

Again, whatever thing has the greateſt ſhare of our Affections, 'tis thereby in the place of a God to us, that will have moſt influence and power in the whole government of us; the homage of mind and body will be paid to it: An ardent Love, let the object be what it will, prejudices the Judgment, inclines the Will, leads all the reſt of the affections, and ſo all the thoughts, the words and the actions, or the moſt of them ſhall be moſt readily employed with ſome relation to that. If any Creature then is thus lov'd, it becomes the Idol of a mans heart, and we revive the abſurd Idolatry of the *Ægyptians*, who made every good thing a Deity: But did the true God ever intend that his Creatures ſhould be thus exalted into a competition with himſelf, for the adoration of Mankind? or can we imagine that he made theſe things Servants to us, with a purpoſe that we ſhould ſerve them, and live negligent of our Duty to him.

Since all our enjoyments are the free gifts of a bountiful and gracious God, 'tis reaſonable they ſhould kindle in us the Love of *Him:* The better and more delightful theſe are for kind, and the larger Portion he beſtowes, we are the more bound thereby to love him: Do not imagine that you can fix your affections in a great degree on your preſent enjoyments, and yet highly Love God too; theſe two diſpoſitions are like heat and cold, which cannot conſiſt in an intenſe degree in the

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ſame Subject. This is that the Apoſtle means in 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. where he ſayes, *If any man loves the World, the love of the Father is not in him:* As the one of theſe encreaſes, the other does proportionably decreaſe; if you much love the things of this World, you love them too much, and God too little.

Now this errour and abuſe is practiſed in the following inſtances.

1. To have the thoughts and affections wholly employed about the things of this Life, and limited within the narrow bounds of this ſublunary World; to take delight only in conſidering and enjoying the Creatures here below; to have no flights of mind, no aſpirings towards God; to have him ſeldom in our thoughts, and but very tranſiently when he is; when the mind does never fix for a few moments upon him; to think of God without any affection, without any deſire or delight; this is evidently to love the things of this World more than him: If the Judgment did eſteem him the chief good, and were convinced of his excellencies, and were acquainted how ſuitable he is to the Capacities of happineſs in man; if the Will did thereupon chooſe and fix upon him as the center of its deſires, as its ultimate end, and beyond whom it neither needs nor inclines to ſeek further for a full content; this were really to Love him, and ſuitably to him and our ſelves; and then the Meditations on him would be ſweet, as they were to holy *David*, as he ſayes in *Pſal.* 104. and then they would often return and abide with you; they would be the gratefulleſt thoughts, obtain the eaſieſt admittance, and entertain you longer than any without wearineſs: Then would your concern to have an Intereſt in God be ſtronger than the delight in what you enjoy at preſent; you would more ardently deſire this, 'till you could obtain the aſſurance of it, and that when obtained, would afford the greateſt delight and ſatisfaction; the diſpoſition of your Soul would be the ſame with that of the Pſalmiſt, when he ſaid, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I can deſire beſides thee*, Pſal. 73. 25.

2. Again,

2. Again, They are certainly lovers of Pleaſure, more than lovers of God, who allow themſelves in unlawful delights; who follow thoſe Pleaſures which he forbids, and will rather break his commands than not gratifie their extravagant deſires. 'Tis the inſeparable property of Love to God to endeavour the obſervance of his Commands. *John* 14. 21. This would make a man deny himſelf, and reſiſt and mortifie his irregular inclinations. Thoſe wild and lawleſs men that purſue their pleaſures without any regard to what is lawful, or what is ſinful, are under no influence or power either from the love or fear of God. He that had ſo true apprehenſions of God as to love him, would underſtand that his Law allows all the Liberty that 'tis fit for us to take in the enjoyment of theſe things. He would give himſelf leave deliberately to conſider upon how many accounts 'tis unreaſonable to go further, and thus he would be fortified againſt Luſt and Temptation.

3. Moreover, That man whoſe Eſtate is dearer to him than his Religion, who is not ready to forſake all his moſt pleaſant enjoyments rather than abandon his Duty, he loves this World more than God. The queſtion in this caſe put to him is, whether he will chuſe and content himſelf with Earth or Heaven? Whether he will retain the poſſeſſion of preſent goods, or the unfailing hopes of better? whether he will have God or the Creature for his portion? And he in deſerting his Religion refuſes the happineſs it would bring him to. He lets go the hopes of an eternal happineſs, to retain for a few moments an uncertain and temporal one: he preferrs the Creature before the Creator, and the ſhallow Streams before the infinite Fountain of Bliſs. 'Tis the enjoyment of God which conſtitutes the Felicity of Heaven, and 'tis no leſs thing than this is ſlighted, when you deſert the way that leads to Heaven. Our Saviour has told us, that he who does not forſake all preſent contentments to follow him, if there be neceſſity for it, is not worthy of him. Without this you have no intereſt in his Blood, in his Merits or Interceſſion. If we are aſhamed or afraid of the Croſs of Chriſt, we ſhall never wear the Crown of Glory. The Glories and

Honours

Honours which he has provided for the Saints will be poſſeſs'd only by thoſe that continue ſuch to the end of their lives. The moſt advantageous uſe we can make of our preſent poſſeſſions, is to loſe them for righteouſneſs ſake; this is to transferr our treaſures from Earth to Heaven, to change them from uncertain and periſhing, to durable and eternal Riches.

(2.) Another rule of Piety to be obſerved is, *That you put your confidence only in God, and acknowledge your dependance to be upon him:* Thoſe to whom the Divine Bounty has beſtow'd a plentiful portion of outward goods, are apt to terminate all their hopes and expectations upon that for the ſupport and comfort of their Lives; to forget that they derive from him all their enjoyments, that his Bleſſing and concourſe gives them all their ſufficiency and goodneſs. Our Saviour gives us an exact Character of this folly in *Luke* 12. beginning at the 16. *v.* where in a Parable he introduces a man whoſe Wealth encreaſes to abundance, and he takes care to diſpoſe of it to the beſt advantage for ſecurity and uſe, but we find no expreſſion to ſignifie that he owns it to come from God, he is not ſenſible of a Providence in the caſe, that this happens to him by the diſpoſal of Heaven; accordingly he contents himſelf in it, applauds and rejoices in his felicity, upon the account of his Wealth, but is ſtill unſenſible of his dependance upon God; and thus the miſtaken Fool flatters himſelf in the 19*th.* *v.* *Soul take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry, for thou haſt goods laid up for many years:* Much pleaſure and content he promiſes himſelf from his enjoyments, without ſeeking to God for it: What (ſayes ſuch an one) ſhall I want? my yearly revenue will allow me to provide my ſelf whatever I deſire, and it is enough to laſt all my dayes in the maintenance of a pleaſant life; I will live free from care and trouble, I will baniſh Buſineſs, baniſh ſorrow from my thoughts, and pleaſe my ſelf 'till I dye. *The rich mans Wealth* (ſayes *Solomon*) *is his ſtrong City, and as an high wall in his own Conceit*; he promiſes himſelf from hence a laſting and impregnable happineſs, but God is not in his thoughts. The ſenſual minds of men

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are wont to take notice only of ſenſible things, and becauſe the concourſe and power of God is excerciſed unſeen towards their ſupport, they are apt to take no notice of it: What they do immediately, and to the apprehenſion of ſenſe derive ſupport and ſatisfaction from, to that they aſcribe it; theſe men enjoy the gifts of God, without making acknowledgments that they are his gifts, without owning that they depend upon him for their virtue and ſufficiency; they cover themſelves every day with rich and convenient Cloaths, but without lifting one thankful thought to the kind donour for them; they make the Proviſion of their Tables, as nouriſhing and pleaſant, and plentiful as they pleaſe, and then ſit down to it as a Swine comes to his trough, with as little acknowledgment of their dependance upon God; they expreſs no thankfulneſs to him for having afforded ſo excellent Proviſion, nor implore his Bleſſing to make it wholſome and nouriſhing. Conſider,

Deut. 8. 3. *Man does not live by Bread alone*, but by the vertue which Gods Bleſſing gives it. Every thing in nature depends upon a perpetual concourſe both in its being and operation; you can derive nothing from any Creature, but what the firſt cauſe enables it to afford; the beſt Food cannot nouriſh, the moſt delicate cannot delight, no cloaths will give you warmth, nor can you find eaſe on the ſofteſt Bed, the largeſt Eſtate will not content the mind, nor any of your enjoyments ſerve the end for which you uſe them, unleſs the all-ſufficient God gives them Vertue and Power; ought not this to be acknowledged then? ſhould we not Pray to him for the comfort and continuance of our Lives? ſhould we not render thanks to him for all the happineſs we enjoy? Conſider too, that he beſtows every good thing which you enjoy; and own that he has made you rich, he has exalted you in the world: It was in his Power to have put you in a mean place, to have cloathed you with rags, you might have trotted in the dirt and duſt for a poor livelyhood among common men, you might have been in that Beggars condition who ſtands hungry and cold at your Gate, and he might have been in your warm Parlour, at your

your plenteous Table, ſtill the Providence of God can make ſuch an alteration. Let him then be owned as the Author of all good, let him alone be truſted in. *Charge them* (ſayes the Apoſtle *Paul* to *Timothy*) *that are rich in this World, that they do not truſt in uncertain Riches, but in the living God, who gives us all things richly to enjoy,* 1 Tim. 6. 17.

(3.) Another Inſtance of of Piety which great and rich perſons ought to charge themſelves with, is *Humility towards God.* The Apoſtle *Paul* thought it neceſſary that ſuch ſhould be admouiſhed *not to be high-minded,* as we ſee in that place laſt quoted. Pride is a vice to which Mankind is ſo much addicted, that it oft ariſes from things that are real diſparagements. We may ſometimes hear men boaſting of their follies and ſins. Riches and Honours are things generally, though not very deſervedly much eſteemed and admired in the World; theſe muſt therefore be very apt to elevate the minds of thoſe that poſſeſs them, beyond a true and modeſt Opinion of themſelves; and if they have ſuch effect, it will appear in the behaviour both towards God, and towards men. It is but too neceſſary then to urge ſuch perſons to the practice of *Humility* towards both. In this place I ſhall mention what Humility towards God requires, and hereafter how it muſt be expreſt in our behaviour towards men.

To demean your ſelves in ſuch an humble manner towards God as you ought, do not forget to acknowledge that you are ſinners in his ſight: Own that you are derived from the fallen *Adam*, and are of the Apoſtate, guilty race, however honourable in the World a few of your Anceſtors may have been: know that no greatneſs of birth can exempt from the real and common pollution; that you derive a ſtain'd, infected nature of whomſoever you are born; that you are by nature Children of Wrath as well as others; are born Heirs of Gods diſpleaſure, whatever heaps of Treaſure, large tracts of Land, ſtately Houſes, or lofty titles you are born to. 'Tis all one in this reſpect to have been firſt wrapt in Raggs, or Purple; to have been nurſed in the ſtately Chambers of the great,

or carried about upon the ſhoulders of a Beggar.

Acknowledge too the actual Tranſgreſſions of your lives; that you have ſinn'd in thought, in word, in deed, in every condition of life, in every Age, in every place that you have been in, that *your Iniquities are more in number than the Hairs of your head.* Acknowledge the aggravations which your ſins have received from the circumſtances wherein they were committed: as that they have many times been contrary to the knowledge and actual checks of Conſcience, contrary to the wiſe and good inſtructions given you in your education, contrary to the intreaties of your beſt Friends: they have been committed upon or little or no temptation, or upon your wilful and needleſs expoſing your ſelf to temptation; that having had the more opportunity and ability to tranſgreſs by having a great Eſtate, you have been perhaps actually the worſe, and ſo have anſwered the greater kindneſs of God with greater affront.

And upon the apprehenſion of theſe great and true diſparagements, you ſhould entertain the meaneſt thoughts of your ſelves, be vile in your own eyes, and own that you may juſtly be ſo in Gods; that if he ſhould abhor, and condemn and reject you into eternal puniſhment, he were righteous. Let not the greatneſs of outward Proſperity hinder you from apprehending the greatneſs of that wrath which is due for your ſin; believe the greateſt to be due. Look upon your Riches as an unprofitable poſſeſſion, which can be no advantage in the day of his wrath; which cannot redeem the guilty Soul from the eternal Priſon, to which if you die impenitent you muſt be confin'd. Look upon your Honours as mean and contemptible things, which can procure no reſpect from the great and righteous God. Lament the ingratitude of your ſins as they regard God, and the folly of them as they reſpect your ſelves; that you have behaved your ſelves ſo unworthily towards him, and have ſo little conſulted your own true intereſt. In a ſenſe of the wretchedneſs of your condition, fly to the hope ſet before you, and depend upon the ſatisfaction and merits of the Redeemer alone, to find favour and acceptance with God. 'Tis

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not below the greateſt man to repent, but it is ſo to tranſgreſs. The commiſſion of ſin degrades and debaſes man, the Repentance for it, if true, raiſes him up again, to humble our ſelves before God is the way to riſe in his eſteem. While we complain, and lament for our ſins, he pities us; while we judge and condemn our ſelves, he acquits and pardons; While with deep reſentment we own our ſelves polluted, he will cleanſe and ſanctifie us.

2. Again you muſt expreſs your Humility towards, God by magnifying all the exerciſes of his Goodneſs towards you, and if you are very ſenſible of your ſin and unworthineſs, you will have a very grateful ſenſe of his mercy. The leaſt gifts of his bounty will be thankfully received, and ought to be ſo; the ſmalleſt portion, the narroweſt Fortune, will keep out diſcontent from the humble Soul, and he will praiſe the God that beſtows any thing where nothing is deſerved. Aſcribe it to the mercy of God, and the merits of the Redeemer, that you are ſuffered to live, that you were nouriſht and brought up though born in blood and pollution; though you had the infection of Enmity againſt God wrought into your natures, though you were *conceived in ſin, and brought forth in Iniquity.* Much admire that when you had forfeited the leaſt favours, the goodneſs of God ſhould be liberal to you, and load you with a rich plenty of the good things of this life. Bleſs him eſpecially for ſpiritual mercies, and the care that he has taken for your happineſs in Eternity. Admire the goodneſs which ordered your Baptiſm, and pray that it may prove the Laver of Regeneration. It was unſpeakable mercy, when he might have thrown you away into miſery, that he ſhould take you into the boſom of his Church in order to bring you to everlaſting life. Adore the mercy that gave you by Parents, or Tutors, ſuch inſtructions as direct to a wiſe, happy, and honourable courſe of life; and eſpecially have an high eſteem of the favour, if theſe inſtructions have made any impreſſion upon you; if you are formed thereby ſo as to live regularly, and practiſe the Rules. Say, *Lord what is man that thou art mind-*

full of him, and the Son of man that thou thus viſiteſt him?

3. Teſtifie your Humility further, by a ready ſubmiſſion to the Divine Commands. Do not think you can be ſo great as to be exempted from the obligation of his Laws who is Soveraign over all things; or that the obligation to Obedience is leſs ſtrict or indiſpenſable upon you, than upon others, when you are beholden to him for greater gifts. A Humble mind will not quarrel at any of the Commands of God, nor account any courſe too ſtrict which he enjoyns: He will ſay with the great pattern of Humility, the bleſſed Jeſus, *Lord, not my will, but thine be done.*

4. Again, you muſt alſo quietly ſubmit to every diſpenſation of Gods Providence: own his Juſtice in every affliction he layes upon you, and command your minds in Patience. 'Tis unreaſonable as well as vain to murmure againſt God, and 'tis madneſs to rage and blaſpheme becauſe he chaſtiſes you. This is like the wild *Scythians*, to ſhoot Arrows againſt the Thunder, which will return upon your heads, and take vengeance for the bold impiety in your deſtruction. By a patient ſubmiſſion under Chaſtiſement, we obtain the Compaſſion of the Father of mercies: This proves like a *ſoft anſwer which turns away wrath.* Prov. 15. 1.

5. Expreſs your Humility towards God, by a modeſt Reverence in his Worſhip, and an honourable eſteem of his Ordinances; to meddle with theſe in a ſlight unſerious manner, is to profane things that are Sacred.

Your Prayers ought to be altogether ſerious and devout, without the leaſt allowed Vanity of the Mind, or wandering of the Eyes, Thoughts or Affections: Is it not moſt agreeable and juſt that we ſhould behave our ſelves with all poſſible ſolemnity, when we are upon our knees, begging of the great diſpoſer of all things for what is neceſſary to our Happineſs, or rendering due Praiſe for abundant and free mercy?

Again, your attention to the Holy Word of God, ought to be very reverent and ſerious, ſuch as is due to divine Oracles. The Holy Scriptures and what is dictated from them, deſerve

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to be regarded as divine Revlations, as a Meſſage or a Voice from Heaven: The Commands are of divine Authority, the Promiſes, the Threatnings are made by the Infinite and Eternal God; and the greatneſs of him from whom theſe things firſt come, ſhould ſtrike an aw, and beget a reverence to them in the minds of all men, thô the Meſſenger from whom they immediately receive them be their inferiour. Reverence and eſteem the Word of God as the appointed means of Salvation; he has determined, *By the fooliſhneſs of Preaching to ſave them that believe*; thô the matter of it may ſeem fooliſh to the ignorant and prejudiced World, and thô the Preachers may ſeem deſpicable to the Proud, yet the effects of Preaching are glorious upon them that believe, upon ſuch as receive the inſtructions that in this way are given to them: By ſo mean an Inſtrument God accompliſhes the great effect of the Salvation of men; what words then can expreſs the madneſs and folly of thoſe men that deſpiſe this Ordinance of God? they have neither any Reverence for him who inſtituted it, nor care for their own Happineſs.

That you may not lightly and careleſly engage in the Worſhip of God, conſider you have therein immediate concern with an Infinite being, you preſent your ſelves before the awful Majeſty whom all the Angels humbly adore; who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, the God before whom the Nations of the Earth are as nothing; who is in Heaven as on a Throne of unconceivable Glory, and thou art on Earth as at his Foot-ſtool. What is the higheſt of men that he ſhould forget to behave himſelf with reverence in his addreſſes to Heaven. Thô you are a little elevated among men, and ſtand higher than ſome others of them, yet you are infinitely below the Deity.

6. Further, let your Humility be exerciſed in having a very modeſt Opinion of your beſt actions. Do not think highly of your deſerts upon the account of any good that you have done: conſider it was the giver of every good and perfect gift that gave the ability to do well; he excited the Will to it, and

and his Providence preſented the opportunity. Acknowledge the unhappineſs of mankind is ſuch, that no action can be performed by any man that is perfect, and does not in ſome reſpect or other want a pardon. At the beſt you have but paid a debt in what you have done, and anſwered an obligation laid upon you. The beſt man ought to expect his reward for the beſt ſervice of his life, meerly from the mercy of God in Chriſt.

4. Another Duty of Piety which thoſe that are rich ought to reckon themſelves obliged to perform, is *to promote Religion as much as they can in the World*; to endeavour God may be generally honour'd, ſince he has graciouſly exalted them. Thoſe whom he has lifted above their Neighbours, have greater opportunity to ſerve him in this kind than others: but ſomething is expected from all men, and every man may help towards the increaſe of Religion, whether he be in a publick or a private ſtation.

And to promote Religion, is the nobleſt and the moſt uſeful kind of ſervice that you can perform; 'tis not below the greateſt of men to ſet himſelf induſtriouſly to it. Religion is the End of the rational Creature; that for which we are men, and endowed with reaſon. To promote this, is to endeavour that God may receive his juſt rights from men: till they become Religious, they are ſo many Traitors and Rebels againſt the common Soveraign. This World, if it were without Religion, would be a Wilderneſs, a Confuſion, without peace or order. This is the Glory of mankind, the Beauty, the Strength, the Happineſs of any Society where it obtains: It is a ſure foundation of Wealth, and Renown, and Stability, to any Community of men. And on the contrary, no Greatneſs can be raiſed or maintained without it. Wickedneſs and Irreligion have overthrown many well-eſtabliſht Empires, and Combinations, but could never raiſe one. Air, Fire, and Water, are not more univerſally uſeful and neceſſary to mankind than Religion. They can as well breath without Air, be warm in the perpetual abſence of the Sun, or quench thirſt without Water, as they can be happy without Religion prevailing amongſt them.

them. Conſider too, that almoſt the whole world lies in Wickedneſs! And how little Religion is there remaining amongſt us! Alas! to how great a degree is that Glory departed from our *Iſrael!* This loudly proclaims what need there is that every one do endeavour according to his place, and power, to encreaſe and ſpread it.

1. You that are great, that have many eyes upon you, ſhould promote Religion by a good and pious Example. You are more largely known in your perſons than common men, and yet more known by Name and Report; and as far as this goes, your Example may do good or hurt to Religion. There is a great propenſity in mankind to imitate thoſe whom they reſpect, their Superiors: if you practiſe Religion, you give it eſteem and repute in the World; and if you neglect it, 'tis expoſed to contempt and ſcorn: 'tis you that muſt bring it into faſhion, and retrieve it from the too general contempt that it now lies under. Conſider, that you do not only diſparage your ſelves by a vicious converſation, but you infect others too; you contract to your ſelves much guilt from the ſins of other men; from all thoſe which your bad example does encourage: And if you are bad men, you are the Peſts of the World, great cauſes of ſin, and conſequent miſery.

How much more are thoſe liable to the blame of other mens ſins, and the infection of the World, who tempt others to wickedneſs, who promote the kingdom and intereſt of the Devil, and ſubſerve the grand *Apollyon* in his deſign of deſtroying mankind? they may be reckon'd a ſort of inferior, incarnate Devils, who ſtrive to introduce vertuous and ſober perſons into the wicked practices and cuſtoms of the Age.

2. Further, Private perſons may promote Religion by the well ordering of their own Families. So far they may command, and they ought to command the practice of this. The greater any of theſe are, the further may he that is the head of it promote Religion: your Children and Servants will help to debauch, and infect the reſt of the World, if they are not religious: for men will take their Examples from the families

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of great men, as well as from their Perſons: Keep up the conſtant Worſhip of God in your Families, in Prayers, in reading the Holy Scriptures, in ſinging Pſalms, and in a ſtrict obſervation of the Sabbath. Are thoſe Families fit to be called aſſemblies of Chriſtians, where there is no conſtant Worſhip of God maintain'd? how can you expect any Bleſſing upon your Society, unleſs you Worſhip God together? The happineſs of a Family lyes in the Love, the Suitableneſs, the Faithfulneſs, the Serviceableneſs of all the Members of it towards one another, and theſe things he alone can beſtow. The Governour of the Family cannot know whether thoſe under him do Worſhip God at all or not, if they do it not together.

If you would have thoſe of your own Family Religious, you muſt be ſo your ſelf; thus far at leaſt your Example will have great influence; it will have greater influence upon your Domeſticks either towards good or ill, than any other can: The Poet ſpeaks a great deal of truth in that ſentence,

Juv. Satyr. 14.

——————— Velocius & citius nos
Corrumpunt vitiorum exempla domeſtica magnis
Cum ſubeant animos autoribus.

The Examples of Vice which we dwell with, if they are in our Superiours too, do corrupt us ſooner than any. The nearneſs and daily converſe with you, is added to your Superiority, to make your bad example fatal to thoſe of your own Houſe. The ſharpeſt Rebuke that can be expreſt in words, is due to the folly of thoſe Parents who take no care how they behave themſelves before their Children; who after they have given them a Nature infected and diſpoſed to ill, that they may not fail to ruine them, give them a bad Example too.

Again, to make your Family Religious, you muſt reſtrain thoſe under you from all manner of Wickedneſs, by reproving the leaſt errours, and puniſhing others. Give them alſo encouragement to do well, let this alwayes purchaſe your manifeſt favour and good-will.

But further, to effect this, you ſhould carefully Inſtruct your

your Children and Servants in the matters that concern their Salvation; if you do not betimes take care to poſſeſs your Children with good and vertuous principles, the adverſary of their Souls will early ſow in their minds the tares of Vices; and ſhould you be leſs induſtrious for the happineſs of your own fleſh and blood, than the malicious Devil is for their deſtruction? ſhould any one hate them more than you Love them, they will have cauſe to curſe you hereafter for having given them being, if they miſcarry through your neglect; *Train up a Child in the way wherein he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it*, Prov. 22. 6. Let them be accuſtomed to do well. The conſtant exerciſe of Piety and Vertue from tender years, will make it eaſie and familiar; Inſtruct them in the matter of their Duty, and labour to convince them of the reaſons that perſwade to the practice of it; tell them how honourable it is to be good and holy, what a luſtre and beauty it has in the eyes of men; that this is approved beyond any thing even in a wicked World; no man is ſo univerſally commended and eſteemed, as he that is ſtedfaſtly and ſtrictly vertuous; tell them what a fragrant odour it leaves behind, how it embalms the memory of the dead; with what applauſe the Hiſtories of all Ages do mention brave and good men. The moſt partial Hiſtories do never offer to commend any man without aſcribing true Vertues to him: *The Memory of the juſt is bleſſed*, Prov. 10. 7. Learn them to put a high value upon the eſteem of wiſe and good men; let them account it mean and baſe to be valued only amongſt thoſe whoſe Vices make them the Scum of the Earth, who will only applaud Confidence and Wit in doing fooliſh and ſhamefull things; there is no applauſe of any men worthy to be valued, but that of ſuch men who are themſelves worthy of Praiſe. Learn them to ſtand in great awe of their Creator, to remember him in their Youth, to be more concern'd to pleaſe him than men, to be moſt ambitious of his approbation in what they do: Let them know that his pure Omniſcience does continually obſerve them, that no darkneſs, no ſecrecy

can hide them from his view; that 'tis of no advantage to conceal their crimes from the Friends that would reprove them, since the righteous Judge of all the World observes, and will at one time or other severely reprove them: They only hinder themselves by secrecy, from enjoying that admonition which might be a means to cure their follies. Thus endeavour to convince their reason that they must be good, endeavour by all great and good allurements, as they grow capable to apprehend them, to perswade and incline their wills to Religion. Be not contented only with your restraining them from wickedness, but learn them as much as may be, to restrain themselves; fasten in their minds such Principles as may have power to keep them regular.

As the observation of the Lords day is one part of our duty towards God, so 'tis a practice that highly conduces towards our performance of all other Duties; 'tis alwayes observable, that the best men are those that most strictly devote this day to Religion. You cannot possibly have a religious Family, unless you keep those that are under you to the publick and private exercises of religious Worship on the Sabbath. This is to give up one day in seven to the consideration of divine things, and 'tis consideration which must give them impression and force upon the minds of men; those most important things revealed from Heaven, will have no influence upon us, if we do not allow them a serious contemplation: On other dayes other lawful and necessary employments will often interrupt you in doing this. Take then the appointed time, and improve it as well as you can for this purpose; give your Servants as little other imployment on that day as you can, and keep them as close as you can to this; spend the time that remains, besides what the publick Worship will take up, in some private exercises of Religion in the Family.

3. Further, Those that are great and rich men, thô not in the Magistracy, may promote Religion among their Tenants and poor Neighbours, by encouraging and countenancing those that incline to it, protecting them from Injuries, preferring

ferring them to your Service, and by frequent commendation of them in the hearing of others. You that have ſo many Tenants, have perhaps ſo many Families that are in ſome dependance upon you, whom you have opportunity to oblige, and can encourage or diſcourage; ſo many will value your favour or diſpleaſure, and may therefore be influenced to the outward practice and profeſſion of Religion at leaſt, by your carriage towards them: 'Tis an uſeful exerciſe of Charity towards the promoting Religion, when you will give Bibles and good Books among your poor Neighbours, and to aſſiſt them in the Education of their Children; ſuch as are very poor, ſet their Children at the beſt to work, as ſoon as they are able to do any Service, that they may earn ſomewhat towards their own maintenance; and they can neither afford them time, nor ſpare any coſt towards the teaching them ſo much as to read; and ſo do many poor Souls live and dye in a miſerable ignorance of thoſe things which concern their Salvation: Oh pity theſe Wretches, and endeavour that as many as you can, may have at leaſt this Inſtruction.

4. You may yet more largely ſerve the Intereſt of Religion, by endeavouring as far as in you lies, that there may be a learned and pious Miniſtry: It were a very publick Service and benefit if you ſhould chuſe ſome poor Lad, that appears to have a very good Wit and ſober Inclinations, and ſend him to the School and the Univerſity; you may entertain in your Family a deſerving perſon, 'till he can obtain a more publick employment: you may out of your abundance ſpare ſome yearly allowance to aſſiſt and encourage a man of mean fortunes, who with good aſſiſtance you have reaſon to think, might be very uſeful in the ſervice of Religion. You may add to the Revenues of ſmall Benefices, for the encouragement of an able Miniſter.

5. When perſons are admitted to a part in the Government, 'tis certain that they have great opportunity to promote Religion; they can force men to at leaſt an outward practice of it; they can puniſh Vice and Profaneneſs, and

make it uneaſie to Men; they can make it aſhamed of its ſelf when 'tis grown bold, or prevent its growing ſo; they can reward, protect and countenance effectually thoſe that will be good Men; they can command a general and ſtrict obſervation of the Sabbath, and force men to aſſemble to one or other of the places of publick Worſhip, whereby they will be under the means to make them good men; 'tis in their power to reſtrain, at leaſt from appearing in publick, that profane liberty of Fancy, ſo much affected under the name of *Wit*; which lies in finding out improbabilities in the cleareſt and moſt important truths, and matter of ridicule in the graveſt rules of Morality and Religion; a practice which tends to make men Scepticks and Atheiſts, to overthrow Religion, and civil Order and Government. Good Principles are the foundation of good Order, and this humour deſtroyes all Principles in the minds of Men, and leaves no foundation at all, whereon to build Virtue or Piety in them: This deſtroyes the power of Conſcience, ſerves to juſtifie the groſſeſt wickedneſſes, and hardens Men in their ſins. 'Tis much in the Power of the Magiſtrate to procure an able faithful Miniſtry, to protect them from Injury and Contempt, and encourage them in their work: But I deſire to be underſtood to intend theſe things only for a little direction to thoſe young Perſons that may hereafter be Magiſtrates.

Thus I have given you a brief account of thoſe Duties towards God, which are required of all men to be regarded in their uſe of preſent enjoyments.

2. Further to ſhow wherein the right uſe of the things of this World conſiſts, I proceed in the next place to ſuggeſt, *The Duties towards men which this requires, included under the name of Righteouſneſs:* And this includes all the Duties of the ſecond Table of the Divine Law, required to be obſerved in our carriage towards our Neighbours; it commands both Juſtice and Mercy in that 2 *chap.* of *Tit.* To do to others as we would be done by, which is the great rule of Righteouſneſs, is a rule both of Equity and Charity; he that exerciſes

Charity

Charity to the Poor, and ſhews Mercy to the miſerable, does to them what he himſelf would deſire that others ſhould do for him, if he were in their Condition: But I ſhall not mention all the particulars under this Head, becauſe I ſtudy brevity, but only will lay down a few general rules, which ſhall include all the particulars.

(1.) *Let every man endeavour to be of ſome good uſe to the Community he lives in:* It ſhould be the hopes of a young man, that he may in the time of his Life be able, and have opportunity to do ſome good ſervice to Mankind: 'Tis generoſity and good nature to be unwilling to live to himſelf alone. Prepare and fit your ſelf for employment, and then readily accept it when it offers it ſelf; thô 'tis not wiſdom for a man haſtily to ruſh into publick buſineſs, before he is well accompliſht, and rightly called to it, yet when he is ſo called and fitted, he ought not to decline or refuſe it; unleſs the circumſtances happen to be ſuch, as that you cannot with a ſafe Conſcience undertake it: 'Tis too great ſelfiſhneſs to conſider the trouble, danger, coſt or pains of an employment, wherein you may do great ſervice to the publick, ſo as to be thereby diſcouraged from undertaking it: There is nothing great and glorious, that is not hazardous and painful, and the more difficulties and dangers attend any good Office, 'tis the more honourable. I cannot chuſe but tranſcribe thoſe two Stanza's ſo full of ſenſe, to this purpoſe in one of our Engliſh Poets.

Be good, and then in pity ſoon be great,
For virtuous men ſhould toil to compaſs Power,
Leſt when the bad poſſeſs Dominions ſeat,
We vainly weep for thoſe whom they devour.

Davenant Gondib. *Canto* 6.

Our virtue without power but harmleſs is!
The good who lazily are good at home,
And ſafely reſt in doing not amiſs,
Flie from the bad for fear of Martyrdome.

A good man will not ſeek an Office for the meer honour of it, but to have opportunity to do good in the World; but ſuch men ought to ſeek and receive in the right way any Offices conferr'd upon them, becauſe otherwiſe bad men who are ambitious will poſſeſs and abuſe them; he is not worthy to live in a Society, by and in which he enjoyes Riches or Honour, who will not deny himſelf in his own eaſe and intereſt to ſerve the publick ſafety and Proſperity: The damage and inconvenience which you may ſuſtain in a publick employment, ought not in caſe of neceſſity to be regarded, unleſs it would be ſo great as utterly to diſable you for performing the Duties of the place. A man ought not indeed to undertake what he is not able to manage, for this would be a great prejudice to the publick: What unprofitable and worthleſs wretches are thoſe who give up themſelves to an idle enjoyment of their own Pleaſures, to live in Eaſe and Luxury, without any concern to do any good! they are the abject, the reffuſe things of nature, differing from the whole Creation beſides; every Creature beſides ſerves to ſome uſe and purpoſe, and they live to none at all.

There are publick employments ſuitable to the ſeveral ranks and degrees of men, and every man ſhould be fit for ſome or other of the employments that commonly belong to the men of his rank, and readily apply himſelf to it.

There are ſeveral good Offices that great men may do to the publick in a private condition, as I have in part ſhown already; you may further help by your Interceſſion with the Magiſtrate to protect the Innocent, to obtain favour and promotion to men of Wiſdom and Honeſty, to right thoſe that have been wronged, and relieve the Oppreſſed; you may vindicate thoſe that may be miſrepreſented and falſely accuſed.

You may be inſtrumental to recover or maintain Peace among the Members of the ſame Society, which is an Office expreſly and particularly bleſt in the Sacred Writ, *Mat.* 5. 9. 'Tis an Office exceeding beneficial to Mankind, and therefore highly pleaſing to God, to endeavour the promoting Peace among

among men : Peace cheriſhes Societies, and makes them flouriſh in Arts, Trade and Religion : Love is the band that tyes multitudes of men together, to the ſtrength, ſafety and happineſs of the whole Combination. You may perhaps find out wayes to employ many Poor, ſo to keep them from Idleneſs, and enable them to maintain their Families, and ſubſiſt without dependance on Charity.

When you are called into any Authority, aſſure your ſelves that you are raiſed by Divine Providence, more for the publick good than your own Honour ; think it glorious to be in ſuch a place a publick Benefit, 'tis to reſemble the Deity in a high and noble manner, who is over all, and good to all, who has power to do harm, and only does good : conſider how much the happineſs of all thoſe that are within the Sphear of your Authority, does depend upon your wiſe and juſt management of your Office ; let a generous pity make you loath to cauſe the miſery of many of your fellow Creatures ; 'tis a barbarous thing to contrive and delight in the miſery of others, and 'tis ignominious and ſhameful to cauſe it by your neglect ; let it be your care therefore, that thoſe who are in ſome meaſure at your mercy, may have no reaſon to lament that they are ſo.

(2.) Another rule of Righteouſneſs by which men ſhould govern themſelves in the uſe and enjoyment of the things of this World, is, *To wrong no man of what is his due*, to take or withhold from no perſon what he has right to, for maintenance of your own pleaſure : Accuſtom your ſelves to exact Juſtice, and do not deſire liberty to tranſgreſs the bounds of it in any meaſure ; deſire no Pleaſure which is a wrong to your meaneſt Neighbour, in Perſon, Eſtate or Reputation. It makes the Societies of men acquainted with more Wildneſs and Cruelty than the Wilderneſs it ſelf, when the greater will pleaſe themſelves to the hurt and damage of the leſs ; while a Beaſt of Prey devours to ſerve his neceſſity, a lawleſs voluptuous man ſpoils his Neighbour to ſerve the extravagance of wanton deſires, and is the moſt inhumane of the two : they are certainly very unrighteous, who to enjoy their Pleaſure beyond

beyond all bounds, and to maintain their prodigal expences, do contract vaſt debts which they know themſelves unable to pay, or take no care to do ſo; this is to Riot at the coſt of other men, to abuſe and rob perhaps him that loves you, and from that Love opened his Purſe to your deſires: You careleſly ſcatter that which it may be your Creditor took a great deal of pains to ſcrape together; the Comfort which he promiſed himſelf to take in what he had gathered, you diſappoint him of; you take the Bread as it were from the mouths of him and his Family, perhaps to throw it to your Dogs, and they muſt goe ragged and thin cloathed, that your meaneſt Servants may be extravagantly fine.

Again, 'tis a moſt cruel and unnatural Injuſtice which they are guilty of, that waſt the Eſtate upon their own pleaſures, which ſhould provide for a Wife and Children; and there never was any Age ſo barbarous in this reſpect as ours; ſome ſpend in *ſuperfluity* and *needleſly* upon themſelves, while they ſuffer their Family to want the things that are *neceſſary*; ſome waſt their Eſtates in the Company of *Strangers*, and *their own fleſh and blood* do hardly partake of them; ſome are ſo monſtrouſly cruel as to give away the affection due to a Wife, a perſon it may be of Honour and great Virtue, with the Patrimony which ſhe brought them, to another woman that is baſe in Birth, or at leaſt in Lewdneſs; as if they only took care to be vexatious, and to leave her no Comfort: Some are negligent of making a treaſure for their Children, thô the Providence of God has put them in a way to do it, out of a prodigal and voluptuous humour that ſpends at leaſt all that comes in: And ſome neglect this out of a baſe unnatural Envy, which would not have their own Children live as comfortably as they have attained to do, without enduring (thô it might not be neceſſary) the ſame pains and hardſhips; *He that provides not for thoſe of his own Houſe*, (ſayes the Scripture) *is worſe than an Infidel*, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Does he that ruines her who committed her ſelf and Fortunes to his Mercy, upon the Vows and Proteſtations of his Love,

Love, perform thoſe Vows, or is he not falſe and forſworn? does he well and faithfully diſcharge the truſt that was put in him? does he kindly requite the Love that laid the greateſt poſſible obligation upon him? No, there is no gratitude, no faithfulneſs in that man. If one falls into the hands of ſavage Thieves, he may be ſtript and robb'd, and be glad to eſcape without further harm; but to be thus uſed by a man, who by great pretences of kindneſs has allur'd me into his Power, muſt be the higheſt baſeneſs in him, and the greateſt trouble and vexation to me.

What thanks do your Children owe you, who have begot them to Sorrow and Miſery, when your extravagant Luſts devour what ſhould afford them a good Education, and comfort them after your Death? Certainly 'tis the proviſion that Parents make for their Children, or their endeavour to provide well for them, the care and pains they take to render them wiſe, good and uſeful to the World, and to enable them to ſubſiſt without a precarious dependance, if they can, which is the thing that layes the great obligation upon Children to Love and reverence their Parents: 'tis for the moſt part meerly accidental that they are born, and 'tis a great unkindneſs and prejudice to give them being, without taking what care you can for their Happineſs; have you natural affection, who to enjoy unlawful and exceſſive Pleaſures, will leave them in a condition that can have none at all. I cannot chuſe but wonder at thoſe men who inherit an Eſtate, which has kept up the grandeur perhaps of a long race of honourable Anceſtors, and by their folly and extravagance do ſpend it, and leave their Children Beggars: They leave perhaps a bare Title to their Children or other Relations, without any Riches to procure it reſpect and eſteem: If theſe men had any thing of a noble Spirit, they would ſcorn to bring either their own Poſterity, or their Name and Title down into the dirt; ſuch are the diſgrace, the ignominy of the Family; they will be remembred with hatred, as long as they are remembred by Poſterity; I wonder that ſuch men are not afraid, leſt the Ghoſt

of ſome departed Anceſtor ſhould diſturb them at thoſe midnight revels, which waſt the Eſtate, and bring the Honour which they purchaſed with great Labour and hazard, into contempt and diſgrace.

(3.) Another rule of Righteouſneſs may be, *To practice all requiſite Humility in your carriage towards men*; this is the Juſtice of requiring no more reſpect from others than is due to us, and of giving to others all the reſpect that is due to them; Let no man arrogate to himſelf thoſe excellencies which he really has not, nor deſire the reſpect due to them whilſt he is without them: There can be nothing more ridiculous, than to ſee a rich Fool conceit himſelf wiſe, to think his mind is full of Wiſdom, becauſe his Baggs are full of Gold and Silver; or for him who bears a Title, to think himſelf upon that account an Oracle: 'Tis too often ſeen, that they who have theſe things in eminence above others, are ready to conceit that they have Wit, Vertue or Beauty above them too, and accordingly they expect to be Honoured; or if they do not conceit they have every excellency in them, yet they put too high an eſteem upon thoſe they have; they think nothing comparable to a great Eſtate or a Title of Honour; and all the reſpect of Mankind, they account due to themſelves. Thô the uſeleſs Creatures live as Cyphers in the Univerſe, and only ſerve to encreaſe the number of men; they are dogmatical in their moſt fooliſh and miſtaken Opinions, and moſt peremptory and ſtiff in all their unreaſonable humours and purpoſes. They are deaf to advice, and offended at reproofs, and will not receive any the moſt uſeful Inſtruction, becauſe that implies they wanted it. They hate the moſt important advice that is given them, under the notion of Controll, and cannot diſtinguiſh between obedience to the good Rules, and obedience to thoſe that give them: They deſpiſe the dictates of right Reaſon and vertue, if ſuggeſted by an Inferiour, from an apprehenſion that to regard them is to ſubmit to that Inferiour; thus their Pride infatuates them to a willingneſs rather to be ruined than directed.

Be

Be not too deſirous of your own Commendation, nor too much elevated when you hear it; thoſe who are much delighted with their own Praiſe, do uſually not much care to hear any mens Commendation but their own; but Humility will not envy other men their juſt Commendation, nor blot it with detraction.

Do not deſpiſe him that is inferiour to you in any thing, he may perhaps excell you in another: God ſeldom gives all ſorts of excellency to one man; And as you would not have him deſpiſe you for your want of that wherein he excells, do not you deſpiſe him for his want of that wherein you excell. The wiſe Providence of God has thus variouſly diſtributed his Gifts, that all men might be uſeful, acceptable, neceſſary to one another; every man ought to be reſpected for his particular endowment, and according as the nature of it does deſerve: Indeed no *man* ſhould be deſpiſed, for if there be nothing elſe in him, he is a *man*, a Creature capable of reaſon, and bears ſome impreſſes of the Divine Creators Image. A humble mind will not deſpiſe the love and offer'd Services of the meaneſt perſon, but will account himſelf under obligation to requite them with kindneſs and good Offices; he will neither refuſe them, nor take them as ſo much due to him as to deſerve no acknowledgment.

So far as honeſty and the advantage of others will permit, a humble man will endeavour to render himſelf eaſie and pleaſant to all in a company, or in his neighbourhood; he will not ſo ſtiffly gratifie and humour himſelf, as not to deny his own inclination ſometimes to gratifie another, which is the common error of thoſe that are new Gentlemen, or ſuch as have gotten a great Eſtate, but have not had a genteel Spirit infuſed by Education: The civility of the World and that which we rightly call a genteel Carriage, is nothing elſe but a humble deportment towards all that we converſe with.

The richeſt, the nobleſt, that are not Magiſtrates, muſt content themſelves to ſubmit to Magiſtrates, and give to each of them the reſpect which is due to the place he holds. 'Tis a

Pride that tends to confuſion and all diſorder, when ſuch deſpiſe and affront thoſe Officers of the State, who out of their Office are meaner perſons than themſelves: They ought to be reſpected in the exerciſe of their Authority, out of reverence to the ſupream Authority which is over every man in the State, and from whence they derive theirs. He that affronts the meaneſt Authority, does in effect affront the higheſt, and is in a preparation to ſlight the Authority of all Laws too. Such things are never practiſed, but when Law and Order begin to give way to the luſts of men: If the Cobweb be broken by Waſps and Hornets, little flies will eſcape through the holes which they make.

(4) *Exerciſe all the Mercy and Charity towards the Poor and Miſerable, which the Providence of God affords you ability and opportunity for.* Imitate the Father of Mercies, and be ye *merciful* as he is. He makes every Creature partake of his goodneſs: The higheſt ſort have their dependance upon it, and the meaneſt are not overlookt or neglected. It is pleaſing to the infinite Fountain, to be alwayes flowing. And 'tis a high and noble imitation of him, for you to take all occaſions of communicating, as you have power, to thoſe that are indigent. Freely you have received from God, and ſhould therefore freely give. As you have been your ſelves beholden to Mercy, you ought to exerciſe it, or you prove your ſelves unworthy of it. What you give to the Poor, is treaſur'd in the hands of God, from whence it will return in due time with a moſt plenteous Encreaſe. Thus you put your *ſuperfluities* to a *good uſe*, and ſhall obtain in reward of thus ſpending them, many *neceſſary bleſſings*. 'Tis a large and comprehenſive encouragement to this excellent duty, which the wiſe man gives in a few words, in 3 *Prov.* 3, 4. *Let not mercy and truth forſake thee, bind them about thy neck, write them upon the Table of thine heart, ſo ſhalt thou find favour and good underſtanding in the ſight of God and men.* Let the Precepts and Rules of Sincerity and Charity be faſtned in thee, let them abide with thee as if written upon thy heart: Let them alſo

appear

appear in thy Practice, and adorn thy Converſation as an Ornament of Gold about thy neck. And then thou ſhalt be favoured and eſteemed both by God and men.

Perhaps there is no one ſort of good Works more acceptable and pleaſing to *God* than this. How high an account he ſets on it, appears, in that he deems the contrary to it a *reproach* to himſelf, and the practice an *honour*. 14 *Prov.* 31. Our Saviour pronounces an expreſs Bleſſing to this alſo, *Mat.* 5. 7. and makes the greateſt Promiſe that can be imagined or deſired, to encourage men to it. *Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhall find mercy.* They ſhall further partake of the divine goodneſs Mercy in general is promiſed; which gives us leave to expect all the various exerciſes of it; to expect whatever is neceſſary to our Souls, and future Happineſs, and what is neceſſary to the continuance and Comfort of this preſent Life. Yea, the Mercy of God does not ſtop at him that is merciful, but deſcends upon his Poſterity too, and *his Seed is Bleſſed*, *Prov.* 37. 26.

Among *Men* it procures a general Approbation and eſteem, every one almoſt will love him that appears to love every one; it poſſeſſes the Minds of Men ſo much in a mans favour, as it conceals a great many faults, and expiates the reſt. Thô every man may have ſome Enemies, the charitable man ſhall have the feweſt of any: The unjuſt Accuſations and Detractions of bad men, will provoke more to the hatred of themſelves than of him; And on the contrary, there is nothing does ſo much raiſe the envy of the World againſt Riches and greatneſs, as to ſee all the Advantages of them terminate in the Poſſeſſors; to ſee them ſeeking nothing elſe but their own eaſe and Pleaſure, and neglecting that good which they might do to others without any prejudice to themſelves: ſelf-love is a vice as generally hated, as 'tis practiſed among men. He that allows it in himſelf, will yet condemn it in another. He that ſeeks only his own advantage, will ſeek it alone.

In the Exerciſe of your Charity, obſerve the following Rules.

1. All

1. All ſorts of men that are able, muſt reckon themſelves bound to give ſome Alms of that which is their own. Thoſe that labour for what they have, are not wholly exempted from this Duty. But are commanded to make it one end of their Eph. 4.28. Labour, to purpoſe and deſign this, that they may be able to afford ſome relief *to thoſe that are in want.*

2. The ordinary meaſure of your Charity ought to be taken from your ability, as is directed, 1 *Cor.* 9. 6, 7. Every man may commonly conſider and allow for his own neceſſity, convenience and the decency of his condition, and of his Childrens after him, and what remains after a moderate Proviſion for theſe, he can properly ſpare. But in extream neceſſity of an Object preſented, you ought ſometimes to enlarge your Charity beyond theſe bounds.

3. Every man that wants, is a fit Object of Charity; except ſuch who make themſelves indigent by Idleneſs and Wickedneſs. And 'tis moſt Charity to them to leave them without help, that neceſſity may cure them. A Good man ought to be preferred before a bad one, to receive your Charity, becauſe this will encourage Religion, and he is likely to make the beſt uſe of what you give. But you ſhould not eaſily entertain any hard thoughts of a poor Neighbour, nor excuſe your ſelves from aſſiſting him by groundleſs ſuſpicions. A Soul truly Charitable is not forward to *think evil,* as the Apoſtle intimates, 1 *Cor.* 13, 5.

4. Do not give your Alms in a proud and contemptuous manner; 'tis more unkind to diſdain and ſcorn, than 'tis a kindneſs to relieve: You ſhould do it with a ſenſe that the Providence of God might have made you the Receiver, and him the Giver; and as you would wiſh to be treated in that caſe, you ought ſo to uſe him. To give in a courteous and humble manner, adds a great luſtre and beauty to the action, and doubles the benefit: When you have beſtow'd a Gift, you ought not to inſiſt much upon the obligation, nor expect that he who has been beholden to you, ſhould in every thing anſwer your humour, and be wholly at your devotion: This looks

looks as if you ſold your Gift for his Liberty; as if you made a bargain, inſtead of doing an act of Charity. If what you gave, did at firſt proceed from kindneſs, you do in effect call it back again, or require him to pay for it, perhaps more than it was worth.

5. Give your Alms readily and chearfully; God and men love a chearful Giver: 'Tis a ſign of inward goodneſs, of a powerful inclination to the good you do, when it flows readily and freely from you. When an act of Charity comes ſlowly from a man, and is unneceſſarily delayed, 'tis to be ſuſpected that it does not proceed from a Charitable inclination; 'tis the effect perhaps of the indigent perſons importunity, and not of the givers goodneſs; 'tis beſtowed for your own eaſe and quiet, rather than out of compaſſion to the poor, and is more a deed of Charity to your ſelves, than to him that hardly obtains it.

Theſe are the Rules of Righteouſneſs to be obſerved in the uſe of preſent enjoyments.

3. In the third and laſt place, *We muſt uſe theſe things with Sobriety, if we would uſe them ſo as not to abuſe them*: And this requires a due regard to our ſelves, to our own intereſt, and honour, and tranquility, in the uſe of this World. That men do not gratifie their Appetites, to the prejudice of the mind or body, to the loſs and conſumption of the Eſtate and Reputation, or to the neglect of thoſe duties which belong to the place and condition they are in. Every man ought to conſider the Circumſtances of his condition, whether he is high or low, rich or poor, and have many Children or poor Relations, or but few or none; and according to theſe he may allow himſelf a more or leſs ſplendid and plentiful enjoyment of his portion. That meaſure which is becoming, and in a manner neceſſary to one man, may to another be extravagant and exceſſive: Beſides, the true end of every Creature that we enjoy is to be conſidered, and to direct in the uſe of it; nothing ſhould be uſed for any other than the right end, or in ſuch a way as does not promote that, nor to that degree that will contradict or deſtroy it.

Theſe

Theſe general Rules I have but briefly mentioned by themſelves, becauſe I judge it will be moſt uſeful to propoſe them connected and applyed to the particular matters which they ought to direct, ſince it may conſiſt with deſigned brevity. I ſhall therefore ſhew how Sobriety requires us to regulate our *Diet*, *Apparel* and *Recreations*.

(1.) *For the right government of your ſelves in Eating and Drinking:* Conſider, that the proper end of them is to nouriſh and ſtrengthen the Body, to maintain it in life, in health and vigour. Meat and drink are as Oyl to the vital flame, which if they be duly adminiſtred, cheriſh it, but if poured on too faſt, they put it out: A man may kill himſelf with exceſſive uſing the means of life. 'Tis a great abuſe of theſe things, to pleaſe a wild Appetite either with the quantity or quality of them, to the prejudice of health; and he that deſtroys his health, loſes that to which all Pleaſures are beholden for their Pleaſantneſs. All the beſt enjoyments of outward things cannot prevent, but that the life will be a burden where this is wanting: This is the pleaſant flavour of Wine, and the neceſſary Sauce of your Sauces, without which they are all inſipid: 'Tis a certain folly then to iucumber your ſelves with diſtempers, which may a long while torment and trouble you, for the ſake of ſo tranſient a pleaſure as that is, which attends the ſwallowing of pleaſant Meats and Drinks, which is enjoyed but in that moment wherein they are paſſing. A wiſe man would endeavour to underſtand by advice and experience, what meaſure and rule were moſt conducing to his Health, and would ordinarily obſerve that. 'Tis lawful, and of ſome uſe at ſome times, to enjoy theſe things a little beyond the meaſure which is meerly neceſſary, as on publick or private Feſtivals, or to expreſs the welcome of Friends; but to do this often, or without moderation, will excite the ſenſual inclinations, and make them unruly and extravagant; and this were to aſſiſt an Enemy againſt our ſelves, and to cheriſh thoſe luſts which war againſt the Soul. The wretch that has ſteept his brain in the fumes of exceſſive drinking, expoſes himſelf to the mercy of every

every temptation. There is no folly ſo very abſurd, no ſin ſo great but he may commit it. Rapes, Murders, Adulteries, have been the too frequent Attendants of Drunkenneſs. Many a man has done that in his Wine which has been the torment of his Mind, and his diſparagement all his dayes. 'Tis neceſſary and uſeful at leaſt to a healthful and vigorous perſon, to deny himſelf ſometimes the enjoyment of that meaſure of theſe things which is commonly neceſſary; to tame the fleſh, and keep it in ſubjection, that he may the better govern himſelf.

They uſe Meat and Drink beyond Moderation, who enjoy them to that degree, that they ſtupifie the Mind, and weaken the exerciſe of Reaſon. Drinking till Reaſon is diſturbed, thô but in a ſmall degree, is in that degree an exceſs. Moſt certain it is, that habitual Gluttony and Drunkenneſs have made ſome men almoſt Fools: Either they have become ſtupid and dull Fools, or raſh and violent ones, drown'd in Phlegm and Sloth, or infatuated with rage and confidence. And in both caſes are they fit to be eaſily impoſed upon, and to become a Prey or a Tool to greedy and deſigning Knaves. But the beſt of the matter is, that honeſt men need not much fear any faction that depends upon ſuch reeling Supporters.

You muſt not ſpend much thought about what you ſhall *eat* or *drink*, nor much of your time in theſe Pleaſures: This is more than is neceſſary to promote the end of them, and ſhows the Mind too much in love with the pleaſure it ſelf. This is to make the enjoyment of that your End; and then it will be too much your Buſineſs. You will live as if you had nothing elſe to do but to eat and drink, and had no other Preparation for Death to make, but to fatten a Carkaſſe for the Worms. The only good that an intemperate Perſon does in the World, is, that he is induſtrious to deliver it quickly from an unprofitable burden. There is a juſt Wo denounced againſt thoſe ſwiniſh Drunkards, that make it their frequent practice to ſpend whole dayes in drinking, in *Iſa.* 5. 11. *Wo*

unto them that riſe up early in the morning, that they may follow ſtrong drink, that continue untill night till the Wine inflames them. Thus is all uſefull ſervice to God and men neglected, and the Sinner at length contracts a habit of Idleneſs, and becomes utterly negligent of his own moſt important Intereſts; he regards not his Trade, nor his Eſtate, or Salvation. For this ſin, becauſe it was to ſo high a degree become common among the Jews, 'tis ſaid in the 13*th* verſe of the forementioned Chapter, that people were puniſht with *captivity* and *hunger* and *thirſt*.

'Tis not ſafe nor prudent to contrive, that your Proviſion be ordinarily very delicate and various: you are the more in danger of exceſs, and do make your own Table a Snare to you. The affectation of this, when 'tis for your own pleaſure, ſhows a wantonneſs of the Appetite, that ought not to be allowed, and too great a love to the pleaſures of the Palate. Or elſe 'tis the effect of former exceſs, which having glutted and weakned the Appetite, it now wants to be excited. Temperance uſually preſerves it ſo well, as to need little aſſiſtance from Art. Nature in health wants little of the exerciſe of Art, and it ſerves only Luxury and Exceſs.

You muſt ſo proportion your expences upon your Diet, as not to neglect any other neceſſities of your own, or thoſe of the Poor, the Church, or the State. He that is ſo far a Glutton or a Drunkard, ſeldom ſtops there. The extravagant deſire encreaſes the more 'tis gratified, and will ſoon grow beyond his ability to ſatisfie it; and then he will rob either God or Man to make himſelf more able. He will make his Feaſts, if he can, with the Spoils of the Church, the neceſſary maintenance of oppreſs'd Orphans and Widows, and the fruits of other mens hard labour: And thus he devours his own reputation too, and makes himſelf odious to all Mankind.

(2) You muſt order your Apparel alſo by the direction of Sobriety. The proper ends of cloathing our ſelves, are to cover our Nakedneſs, and conceal our ſhame; to defend and guard the

the frail Body from all unkindneſſes of weather; and to diſtinguiſh the ſeveral ranks and degrees of men, by ſuitable Ornament. The ſenſual minds of men are commonly much influenced by ſenſible things, and therefore are ſplendid or grave habits uſed to procure that reſpect and veneration which is due to thoſe Perſons that wear them. The common abuſe of Apparel, and that from which all the Irregularities concerning it do proceed, is too much affectation of Ornament, upon the account of that reſpect which is commonly paid to it in the world. Thoſe that leaſt underſtand true excellency, and give the greateſt Veneration to external ornament in others, are wont to be moſt concerned about this for themſelves. They take leſs care to adorn and accompliſh their Minds with Knowledge, Wiſdom and Vertue, than to adorn their out-ſide with fine and gaudy Cloaths. Contrary to that advice of the Apoſtle in this caſe, which he gives, 1 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4. *Let your adorning be* (ſayes he) *not that of the out-ſide, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing gold, or of putting on Apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, in a meek and quiet Spirit, which in the ſight of God is of great value.* 'Tis of more importance ſurely to have thoſe excellencies which are in eſteem with God, than thoſe which are only valued by the weakeſt of men. How little muſt it deſerve of time, coſt and pains, to obtain the admiration of Fools. A wiſe man, thô he will not ſlight altogether this ſenſual means of procuring reſpect from the ignorant and vulgar, becauſe that reſpect may in ſome caſes be neceſſary to himſelf, and uſefull for them; yet he will not be much concern'd about ornament, becauſe none but ſuch men will value and reſpect him at all the more for that.

Since this is all that Ornament ſerves for, he will not to be fine, neglect the neceſſary defence of his body. He will conſider, that the rude Elements pay no reſpect to a Faſhion, and therefore will not expoſe himſelf to be hurt by them, for the unprofitable reſpect of fooliſh men.

He will not think that the matter of dreſſing can deſerve

to be the ſole buſineſs of himſelf and a ſervant, for ſeveral hours, and to be managed with a curious accuracy and care.

'Tis doubtleſs a great folly for a man to employ a great part of his Eſtate in the proviſion of his Apparel. The neceſſity of the body is ſerved with a ſmall expence; and if you will value the eſteem of men, 'tis wiſeſt to obtain by good and generous actions the eſtimation of the beſt and wiſeſt men: This is a more valuable reputation than you can purchaſe by great expences on your Cloathing.

He that affects to be fine above his quality and degree, that he may have the greater reſpect, will find none at all: Some will be as fooliſh as himſelf, and ſtrive to be equal to him; and all others will deſpiſe and condemn him, either for his Pride, or Prodigality. Cuſtom is the common Rule that preſcribes what it becomes every mans quality and degree to wear. But ſince alwayes ſome of every ſort are ſo fooliſh as to endeavour to equal their Superiours, and in ſo prodigal an Age as ours is, the Cuſtom allows much more expence upon the Apparel than is juſt or neceſſary; you ought to make thoſe of your own ſort your Pattern, who are the moſt frugal and moderate men. Together with the Cuſtom of the Times, conſider your own Circumſtances; what is required by other juſt occaſions of expence, and let the Cuſtom be obſerved only ſo far, as Prudence and Juſtice will permit. Common practice will not juſtifie any Vice in the ſight of God, thô it too often does ſo in the opinions of men. And if it diſpleaſes him, that others ſpend a great part of their Eſtates in the Ornament of their Bodies, it will diſpleaſe him if you do ſo too. If a great meaſure of what is ſpent in this purpoſe might be ſpared from this, and better employ'd, it ought to be ſo, and the giver of it expects that it ſhould be. And when you muſt render an account how you have uſed the enjoyments that he gave, you will appear, if you have been Prodigal in this matter, to have been fooliſh if not unjuſt Stewards.

(3.) *Let your Recreations alſo be regulated by Sobriety.*

The goodneſs of God allows men the uſe of theſe for the refreſhment

freſhment of body and mind: The powers of both are finite, and may be wearied and waſted with continual labour; we may divert our ſelves therefore ſometimes from buſineſs, to be the better prepared to return to it again; but 'tis quite to alter the nature and deſign of recreations, to make a buſineſs of them, to ſpend all your time in running from one idle pleaſure to another: *He that lives in Pleaſure, is dead while he lives*; 1 Tim. 5. 6. He is as uſeleſs to the World as a dead Carkaſs, and it may be infects others too by a bad example, and he is as bad as dead to himſelf, in regard that he does nothing towards his own true Intereſt: He neglects all his moſt important affairs; He becomes daily more and more a Slave to the malicious Devil, by virtue of ſome ſins that grow confirm'd and habitual; he ſwims down the ſtream of ſenſual Pleaſures, towards the dead Sea of Pain and Perdition. In this careleſs kind of Life, he is only buſie to deſtroy himſelf: He that gives himſelf up to ſenſual pleaſure, does divert himſelf indeed, but 'tis from Wiſdom, from Piety, from Virtue, from everlaſting Happineſs. Oh conſider how unprofitable a life this is! what advantage have you from paſt dayes that have been ſpent in Pleaſure? if you are ſick of the folly, and intend to live more wiſely for the future, you have gain'd then ſome advantage by them, but if you are hardened in the mad courſe, and inclined ſtill to go on, you are much the worſe for them. All wiſe and good men grieve to ſee a young perſon wholly addicted to Pleaſure, they know the bitter Repentance that will at one time or other follow this; they foreſee the torments of Mind, that early or late it will end in; they know that every extravagance which you are now guilty of, will one day prove a ſharp Sword to ſtab and wound you.

Recreations muſt not be uſed as *Paſtimes*, there can be no need of any ſuch thing to us, who have but a little while to live, and much to do; can you not tell what to do with your time? is it ſo eaſie a matter to conquer vicious inclinations, to wean your affections from their propenſity to ſenſible things,

things, to furniſh your minds with every Virtue; that you can do all this, and have too much time? if beſides this you have any publick buſineſs to attend, you have more need to redeem your time than to throw it away; if you may hereafter have ſuch buſineſs, 'tis your wiſdom to improve the opportunity of your preſent leiſure, for the preparing your ſelf to manage it to your comfort and honour.

Let the Recreations you chuſe be only ſuch as are lawful; there are as many allowed as you can want, enow to ſpend more time about than you can well afford; do not venture
1 Cor. 13.6 therefore upon any that have certainly ſin in them; *Rejoyce not in Iniquity*; make not any ſins of other men the matter of your delight or diverſion, 'tis contrary to the rule of Charity to be pleaſed with that which is ſo hurtful and miſchievous to the guilty perſon; 'tis the Pleaſure of a Devil to tempt and draw men into ſin, and then laugh at them; do not make your ſelves merry with ſacred things, they are not matters to be jeſted with, which ought to be reverenced: it is not neceſſary either to the Mind or the Body, nor certainly ſafe, and therefore not prudent to uſe thoſe Recreations, concerning which Divines are in diſpute whether they be lawful or no, ſuch as they are which rely wholly upon chance, as Dice and the like: in a doubtful Caſe, where no neceſſity compells, 'tis too great a boldneſs not to abſtain from ſuch things.

Chuſe thoſe Recreations that are leaſt offenſive to the Pious and Wiſe, and avoid all that are not of good Report: They I think are juſtly cenſur'd, who frequent publick Dancing Schools, and Balls, and eſpecially Maſqueraders. 'Tis no preciſe moroſeneſs to cenſure thoſe who need not diſguiſe or conceal themſelves, if they intended to do nothing ſhameful: You muſt value and be concerned to maintain a Reputation, or you are loſt; there is little hope of that man, that he will ever be good and truly honourable, who is grown regardleſs of this; 'tis a wonder if he does not run into all manner of wickedneſs, when the reſtraint of Shame is taken off.

'Tis

'Tis great imprudence, to uſe thoſe Recreations that are dangerous temptations to wickedneſs. Since our power to reſiſt ſin is very weak, and we are naturally more inclined to comply with than reſiſt it; we ought by flying the temptations and occaſions, to ſeek that ſafety which our own ſtrength cannot give us. To young perſons the deſcription and repreſentation of ſome ſins is a Temptation, eſpecially is it miſchievous, when in the repreſentation the guilty perſon is introduced wittily pleading for his ſin, and juſtifying or extenuating it; for thô what is wittily ſpoken, is not alwayes the truth, yet it is generally apt to impoſe upon young perſons that are inconſiderate, and have not reſolutely fixed in themſelves good Principles. You cannot ſay there is no harm in going often to the Play-houſe, if you become thereby more addicted to ſenſual Pleaſures, which are there repreſented with all poſſible advantages to charm and allure; unhappy Youth is too much inclined to theſe without ſuch help: You do actually receive hurt by ſeeing Playes, if Luſt be inflamed, or Pride in Apparel encreas'd, or you learn Diſſimulation, and become ſtronger inclined to any of the Vices of the Age; if you learn there to deſpiſe Morality, Government, Laws and Religion, by ſeeing the errours and defects of Magiſtrates, and wiſe and good men repreſented and derided: Humane nature is in all inſtances unperfect, and the greateſt and beſt men are not without ſome faults, but to repreſent thoſe of Magiſtrates and Miniſters upon a publick Theater, to be ſcorn'd and laught at, has commonly the miſchievous event of making Magiſtracy and Miniſtry vile, and the Age licentious.

Do not play out of Love to Money, or meerly to win of others; this is the Trade of common Cheats, and tends to make you ſuch; this gratifies a covetous humour, and cheriſhes it, and is a relaxation that binds you faſter in the bonds of Iniquity. Avoid too the contrary extream to this, and be not willing to loſe more than is convenient: you muſt not neglect to provide things neceſſary, and convenient, and decent.

decent for your ſelf and your family. Be not ſo unjuſt and cruel, as to throw away your Creditors money, your Servants wages, your Childrens bread and Inheritance, or your Wives Portion, to enjoy ſo ſmall, ſo unneceſſary a pleaſure as that of play. How barbarous is he, that will make ſo many miſerable, without any neceſſity or real advantage to himſelf. That you may not thô unwillingly, throw away too much at play, it ſhould be your reſolution not to venture too much: Venture no more than you may be willing to loſe, and if that be gone, command your ſelf at that time to proceed no further. Gaming does often inſenſibly entice men into exceſs, in the time they ſpend at it, and in the Money they expoſe: If they win, they are encouraged to both theſe, in hopes that good luck will ſtill favour them: If they loſe, they are tempted to go on with hope to turn their fortune, and recover their loſſes: To recover a great deal at once, they are tempted to expoſe a great deal more, and ſo frequently loſe more to too much loſt already. It requires more wiſdom for a man to govern himſelf well in theſe matters, than is commonly found in thoſe that are much addicted to them.

Take heed that you be not tranſported with paſſion in your play. All exceſs in it may follow, if you have once given the Reins to paſſion; and beſides, you will be apt if you are croſt, to blaſpheme God, and quarrel with your Neighbour. That is too dear a recreation, and much more ſad in the conſequence than it can be pleaſant in the enjoyment, wherein you offend God, and hurt your Neighbour and your own Soul.

Thus I have finiſht the firſt and chief part of this deſign, and ſhown you wherein the right uſe of the things of this World does conſiſt.

I now proceed to the ſecond thing intended; which is, *to urge thoſe Motives included in the Apoſtles argument here, to perſwade you ſo to uſe this world as not abuſing it:* His Argument for this is, *The faſhion of this World paſſes away;* and the Motives this includes, are theſe following.

1. *'Tis poſſible your preſent enjoyments may fail and be loſt, before*

fore the end of your life: There is hardly any good thing of this World that men enjoy, which they can be aſſured to retain in poſſeſſion all their days.

We cannot be certain of the continuance of our Riches. *Job*, that on one day was the Wealthieſt man in all the Eaſt Countrey in his time, became by the next, miſerably poor. How many like Inſtances does Hiſtory preſent us with? And how many more might our own obſervation in a few years tell us, if we make obſervation? If you are Rich in Treaſures, Thieves may ſteal them; if in Ships and Merchandize, the ſtormy Sea may ſwallow them, or they may be ſeized by Pirates or adverſe Nations: If in Buildings, or a large ſtock of rich Goods, Fire may conſume them; if in Lands, they may be wreſted from you by Tricks of Law, and the knavery of corrupted Judges and Lawyers. The negligence or imprudence of Servants may ruine the Maſter, or if they are diſhoneſt and wicked, they may draw from him to enrich themſelves; eſpecially, when the whole management of an Eſtate is committed to them. The Providence of God may blaſt a mans Eſtate, ſo that it ſhall waſt he knows not how, nor how to prevent it. Riches, which you may hope will be a defence againſt Adverſity, may expoſe you to it. Some have been miſerable, and ſome have loſt their lives by being rich: They are often a Prey to violence and injuſtice, when poorer Perſons are let alone. In the Invaſions of Enemies, the Palaces of the great are rifled, while the poor lonely Cottage may ſtand ſecure; and they themſelves are chiefly ſought for and kill'd, or made Captives, while *the Poor of the Land* eſcape by being deſpiſed. Jer. 52.16.

What conſtancy is there in the Honours of this World, which depend upon the changeable inclinations and eſteem of men? Has not the World often ſeen the greateſt Favourites of Princes become the Objects of their hatred and ſcorn; undermin'd and overthown by the detractions firſt, and then the accuſations of envious men; who after they have ſhone a little while with the borrowed luſtre of their Princes favour, have

gone down Eclips'd, and bluſht perhaps in their own blood at their ſetting.

Stet quicunque volet potens
Aulæ culmine lubrico.

Let him who liſts aſcend the tottering Seat of Courtly Grandeur, ſaid he, in the perſon of another, that found it a tottering ſeat by his own experience: As for popular applauſe and an honourable eſteem among the vulgar, that is gain'd by many actions, and may be loſt by one: If a man cannot loſe a noble Title while he lives, yet the Reſpect and Honour due to it, and all the other advantages of it are uſually loſt when his Eſtate is thrown away: He that lacks bread, may honour himſelf, but few beſides him will do it. 'Tis ingeniouſly ſaid by one, That Honour without Riches, is like Hops without Poles to ſupport them aloft; It muſt creep upon the ground, and is expoſed to be trod upon by contempt.

Seneca Thyeſt. Act. 2. Chor.

Du Moulin of Contentment.

Now, if theſe things are gone away from you while you live, all the Pleaſure, the Convenience of them is vaniſht too; and then, what will the wretched man do to be happy, who had ſet his chief affections on theſe things? What will he do for delights, when all that he delighted in is gone? How burdenſome and melancholly will the remaining part of his life be! How often will he ſadly think, how happy he has been, how miſerable he is! Should we truſt *in uncertain Riches*, and not rather *in the living God*, when *they* may fail us, *he* cannot! Shall we lay any confidence on friends, when the minds of men are ſo mutable? Is not this to lean on a broken Reed, which may fail our truſt, and wound us with diſappointment? What ſhame and confuſion will ſeize him in an adverſe condition, who in his Proſperity behaved himſelf haughtily towards others! How uneaſie will it be to his lofty Spirit, to ſee himſelf the ſcorn of the meaneſt abjects! And yet certainly no man is ſo likely to meet with contempt in a low condition, as he that practiſed it in a higher

a higher. It ſhould be a provocation to brave actions, to conſider; Perhaps my Fortune may not long continue my advantages for the doing of them. A generous and publick Spirit, a lover of mankind, would ſay, Since the enjoyment of theſe things is uncertain, I will do all the good with them to mankind that I can whilſt I yet retain them; I will induſtriouſly ſet my ſelf to this, leſt I loſe my advantages, and die without doing any good in my time. If a man has exerciſed much compaſſion to others in their Miſery, he will find much in his own; if he has been injurious, and an oppreſſor, every one will retaliate, and the ſame meaſure that he gave to others, ſhall be meted to him again. If by good and virtuous actions a man has acquired the eſteem and friendſhip of good and virtuous men, they will not deſert him in his adverſity, but will join their aſſiſtance to comfort or raiſe him up; but if all his Friends and Familiars, and all that eſteem him, are men of no virtue, of debaucht Principles and Manners, they will ſoon forſake him when adverſity comes: The cold blaſts of that will very eaſily cool the love of ſuch men; and thô they crowd his Table with their company while 'tis covered with rich plenty, he may eat his morſels in melancholly ſolitude when they are ſcanty and courſe. How uneaſie will Poverty be to him that lived in boundleſs pleaſure; who could deny himſelf in nothing, but was wont to gratifie every deſire, and now has nothing to enjoy? He is poſſeſt with high and raging deſires, and has no means to ſatisfie them. A temperate man will much more eaſily endure ſuch a change, who has been wont ſometimes to croſs his own deſires, and by that means has kept them moderate. 'Tis certainly the moſt effectual courſe that you can take, to make Adverſity tolerable, to uſe your Proſperity in Godlineſs, Juſtice and Sobriety.

(2.) *Your death will ſhortly call you out of this World, and from the enjoyment of preſent things.* Thus the faſhion of this World paſſes away. *One Generation goes, and another comes. Who is he that lives, and ſhall not ſee death?* (ſayes the Pſalmiſt,) Eccleſ. 1.4

miſt,) *Pſal.* 84. 48. The eyes that now read this ſhall periſh, whatever vigour or brightneſs there may be in them at preſent: 'Tis now your turn to enjoy, perhaps the Riches and Honours which were poſſeſt before by your Anceſtors: They after a while went off the Stage of this mortal ſtate, and ſo muſt you, and leave thoſe things to be enjoy'd by others. When a man dies he ſhall carry nothing away, *His glory ſhall not deſcend after him*: This encreaſes with reſpect to us, the uncertainty of the duration of our preſent condition; Since all your pleaſures fly away with life, who can aſſure himſelf any certain continuance of the enjoyment? It may endure for a few years, perhaps but for a few dayes or hours longer. How many things are able to cut the ſlender thread of humane life! How eaſily is a man kill'd? A hair, a little bone, a flie, the weakeſt thing in nature can eaſily diſpatch frail man! How many ill accidents are we alwaies liable to, beſides a multitude of Diſtempers! What can be more uncertain than life, which is ſo weak, and beſet with ſo many Enemies? If it be ſuffer'd to continue as long as Nature, not abuſed, but carefully cheriſht, can maintain it, 'tis but ſhort: The flower Life quickly withers, if it be not cut down: It muſt needs be ſhort, when it makes continual haſt to its end: when there is never the leaſt ſtop put to the flying days; the flying days hurry us upon their rapid wings, with reſtleſs ſpeed into Eternity: A part of life flies away every minute, and the remainder grows leſs; while you are jovial and careleſs, your time is waſting, it ſteals unheeded from you; precious time, which once gone can never be recall'd; a life, a year, an hour ſpent can never be recall'd.

Pſal. 49. 17.

Thus are you never far off, and yet alwayes proceeding towards that important period, when you muſt bid adieu to Greatneſs and Honour, adieu to Flattery and Complements, to ſoft Beds, gilt Chambers, plenteous Tables, gawdy Ornaments; adieu to your ſtately Houſes, beauteous Gardens, large Poſſeſſions, ſhining heaps of Treaſure; adieu to pleaſant Muſick, to ſprightly Wine, jovial Company, brisk Dances,

and

and all the admired Charms of Youth and Beauty: *Man goes to his long home, and the Mourners goe about the ſtreets:* The gawdy Rooms are hung with melancholy Sable, and his Friends lay aſide Ornaments, and cover themſelves with black; he is carried away to the dark ſilent Grave, to become neglected duſt, and a cold unbeautiful Clod; his place here ſhall know him no more for ever; he goes to Eternity, never, never to return again to time: His Walks, his Houſes, his Parks, his Shop, the Exchange, the places of his Buſineſs, or his pleaſure ſhall know him again no more for ever; *Oh that men were wiſe, that they would underſtand this, and conſider their latter end!* Eccl. 12. 5.

Since the enjoyment of theſe things is tranſitory, and will be ſhort, ſhould we place our Affections upon them? Good things are uſually of greater or leſs eſteem with us, according to their durableneſs; ſince therefore Life with its Pleaſures are not durable, 'tis not worthy of a great Value. If we could but frame a lively conception of the ſhortneſs of this Life, how ſhould we deſpiſe the Pleaſures of it? Vain are the Riches of the World, which are uſeful no longer than while we live here; Vain are all the Honours and Applauſes of the Age, which cannot reſcue us from Deaths dark Priſon, nor attend us to the other World: What account would you make of a fine houſe founded on a Quick-ſand? what account of Mirth and Jollity in a ſmall Cock-boat on the wide Ocean? what account of a Pleaſant Dream? ſuch alas is all the Proſperity of this World: Open then thine eyes, thou deluded admirer of theſe things, and take a view of the Eternal Pleaſures and Glories of the World to come; ſee what Joyes, what delights, what bright Manſions, what a bleſſed Society do invite thy affections upward; the Infinite, Eternal, Unchangeable God, thy chief good, invites thy Affections, he offers himſelf to be thy everlaſting Portion, and exceeding great Reward; ſet thy affections then on things above, and let thy deareſt treaſure be in Heaven; ſpend thy time more in ſtriving to attain theſe, than in the enjoyment of preſent things;

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conclude it moſt abſurd, to value things temporal above the eternal, and to chuſe the frail pleaſures of this life, when they ſtand in competition with thoſe that are everlaſting. To make your paſſage out of this world comfortable, you muſt be ſecure of Comforts in the other; you will be glad to leave a Life ſo allay'd with frequent vexations, as this is, to every man, when you have good hopes to enjoy that Happineſs which knows no mixture of trouble: Since Death is a common Neceſſity which every man muſt obey, 'tis the Wiſdom and Intereſt of every one to provide that he may undergoe it with Comfort.

Since the end of all your preſent Pleaſures is certain and near, live piouſly, righteouſly, and ſoberly in the enjoyment of them, that ye may not when that time comes, be troubled with a *Guilty Mind*. Oh how intolerable will it be to bear at once the loſs of all your preſent Comforts, with the pangs of a painfull death, and the torments of a deſpairing remorſe! How ſad a ſtate will you think your ſelf in, when you are ſummon'd to depart hence, and a rouzed Conſcience preſents to your view a long Catalogue of enormous Crimes! Will you not then wiſh you had lived a regular Life, when you find your ſelf going to receive what a Life of wickedneſs has deſerved. Oh how ungrateful now will be the remembrance of unlawful Pleaſures, of your guilty exceſſes, and mad careleſneſs of your immortal Souls! Now the ſting of ſinful Pleaſures is ſeverely felt, and they wound and torment the Sinner more deep and ſenſibly than ever they pleaſed him before; it torments him to think that for ſuch things he ſhould caſt away himſelf, and incurr the eternal Wrath of God; and he is ſeized with dread and horrour, at the thoughts of what is likely for the future to become of him; he fears he ſhall be baniſht by the angry Juſtice of God to ſome diſmal abode, where no ſmall Comfort will ever come near him; that he ſhall change his merry Companions for the curſed Society of damned Spirits, to dwell among them a weak, ſcorn'd, abuſed Stranger, to be vexed without pity by malicious Creatures, whoſe

whoſe own Torments encreaſe their rage; he would pray it may be for Mercy, but his own remembred Cruelty daſhes his hopes; he ſhow'd no mercy in his Life, but was deaf to the wants and intreaties of the Poor, while he ſpent his wealth in Riot and Luxury; he would cry to God to ſpare his Life a little longer, and try how well he would manage the reprieve, but that he calls to mind how deaf himſelf has been to the Divine Commands, how he has deſpiſed the Promiſes and Threats of God, and neglected all the warnings and inſtructions that were ſent to him: And indeed, *Since he has hated Inſtruction, and deſpiſed Reproof*, to the laſt, *God will now laugh at his Calamity, and deſpiſe him when theſe fears come upon him:* The ſeaſon of abuſed Mercy is at an end, and deſerved Vengeance begins; and now to have been a holy and a good man, would more avail than to have worn a Crown and wielded a Scepter: Now the greateſt of men is rejected, if he be an impenitent Sinner; nothing but righteouſneſs and holineſs can find any favour with the righteous and holy God: Now will he that was injurious to men, find the great Soveraign of the World a ſevere avenger of all wrongs; and he that abuſed his enjoyment of the Creatures and gifts of God, ſhall be baniſht from the Happineſs of enjoying God himſelf; this is the direful end of a wicked Life, and thus will the Wretch be uſed at laſt, who abuſes his Portion here. Prov. 1. 24. to the end.

(3.) *By the abuſe of your preſent enjoyments, you encreaſe the mutability of them, at leaſt with reſpect to your ſelves:* You make your changeable Condition here more liable to change, if you do not uſe it well; a man muſt uſe a veſſel of Glaſs with more care than he need to do one of Iron: The loſs of your enjoyments during Life, or by Death, may be cauſed or haſtened by the abuſe of them.

That Eſtate which might afford a man comfort and pleaſure through a long life, a few years of extravagant expences will make an end of: the deepeſt Bag has a bottom; and you may obſerve by other men, that the greateſt Eſtate, if it be not wiſely and moderately uſed, may in a little time be thrown away.

away. *The Glutton and the Drunkard ſhall come to Poverty; and Drowzineſs ſhall cloath a man with Raggs*, ſayes the wiſe man, *Prov.* 23. 21. Again, *By means of a whoriſh Woman a man is brought to a morſel of bread*, *Prov.* 6. 26. He ſhall be ſerved juſt as the Prodigal in the Parable; firſt gull'd and drawn dry of all his Wealth, and to that purpoſe may be highly flatter'd, and carefully pleas'd and humour'd, and when he is poor ſhall be deſpiſed as much, and kickt out of Doors, and then like him he may have the honour to ſerve Swine, or be preferr'd to dine with them. Theſe ſins, when a man becomes addicted to them, do naturally bewitch him with a ſtrange careleſneſs of all his Affairs, and tend to make him moſt laviſhly prodigal. He cannot keep his expence upon them within any other bounds than neceſſity forces: As long as his own Eſtate will adminiſter to him, or others will lend, theſe wild ſins can find occaſion for expence.

The exceſſive and intemperate uſe of ſenſual pleaſures, weakens and gluts the Appetite, and he that ſo uſes them, can never have ſo high a Reliſh and ſenſe of them as he may that is moderate. Fooliſh men through their greedy deſire of Pleaſure, deſtroy the thing they love: The Rich Glutton cannot take ſo much delight in his higheſt delicacies, as the hungry Labourer does in his courſe fare.

By Exceſs too, men deſtroy themſelves; they turn food into Poyſon, and bring themſelves to miſery by their pleaſures. It blaſts the health of their body, and fills them with uneaſie diſtempers; and hereby their lives are made miſerable, and their death is haſtened: After a few tedious and groaning years they drop betimes into their Graves. Sobriety and moderation are the moſt effectual means to cheriſh the health and life. But a man muſt begin and practiſe them from his youth, that they may have this effect: 'Tis late to begin it when you have corrupted the blood, and evaporated the ſpirits, and contracted diſtempers: the Jewel health is much more eaſily kept, than recover'd when 'tis once loſt.

Poverty, Sickneſs and Death, the great Enemies of your Pleaſures

Pleaſures, are the natural Conſequents of the intemperate uſe of them. But beſides, theſe evils may be expected to follow this, from the juſt judgment of God. As he is highly offended at every abuſe of his gifts, he may teſtifie that diſpleaſure by taking them away from you, or you from them. Conſider, careleſs Sinner, that you continually provoke the righteous God, to put an end to all your Mirth and Pleaſure; every irregularity you are guilty of deſerves this, and perhaps does haſten intended Vengeance: The more you abuſe the Patience of God, the more unlikely do you make the continuance of it.

Now conſider theſe things but a little, and the folly of a lawleſs intemperate Life will moſt plainly appear; is it not an unparalel'd folly to purchaſe a little wild Mirth at the dear rate of a miſerable remainder of Life, and a haſty Death? Alas how little of the Pleaſures of this Life do you enjoy, who are ſo ſoon overtaken by Diſtempers! what delight can a Man take in his dainties, when his ſick Stomach naſeates them? what Pleaſure is there in Muſick when the Head akes, or is affected with a Frenzy or a Lethargy? what delight has the Sinner in his moſt pleaſant Sins, when he lies languiſhing in a Bed, his feeble Limbs not able to ſupport him, and there he is rotting alive? the remembrance of them is rather vexatious than pleaſant, wher the pains he feels were contracted by them. How little of the Pleaſures of Life do they enjoy, that ſoon dye, are cut off in the midſt of their dayes, and carried out to be laid in the Duſt? Methinks if there were no other Argument for Temperance, the Love of Pleaſure ſhould perſwade to it: Conſider too how ſad and uncomfortable that Death will be, which you are conſcious that your ſelves have haſtened; when you think how many years longer in a courſe of nature you might have lived, and now are called haſtily away from all that you have loved and delighted in.

Thus do careleſs Sinners purſue their own Miſery and Vexation, when they allow themſelves a boundleſs gratification of their Luſts, and ſeem to be only in the purſuit of Pleaſure; let it therefore be your reſolution and care, ſo to uſe this World as not abuſing it.

Now I have finiſht both the intended parts of this Diſcourſe; I have ſhown you how to behave your ſelves in the uſe of your preſent enjoyments towards God, and towards your Neighbour, and your ſelves; and the motive which the Spirit of God thought worthy to perſwade men thus to uſe theſe things, I have illuſtrated; what ſucceſs this Diſcourſe has upon the Reader, I know not, but doubtleſs the great God obſerves; either it will reclaim or withhold thee from the Vices of a mad Age, or make thee more guilty in following them, after having received another Exhortation to the contrary: Thou doſt not intend perhaps to run into the great extravagances menti-on'd, but yet art unwilling to obſerve the ſtrictneſs of Rule; but conſider, that ſin is very apt to encreaſe, that the ſmall degrees of tranſgreſſion allow'd, make way for greater, and they make it juſt with God, and provoke him to give thee up to ſuch a high degree of ſin, as may ſeverely puniſh its ſelf. Conſider, this general Rule which I have explain'd and urg'd, is the Command of Almighty God, thou canſt not willingly break it without Offence to him; 'tis of no leſs conſequence to obſerve or ſlight it, than to enjoy his favour or incurr his diſpleaſure: Oh think how eaſily he can cruſh the bold offending Worm! think what a danger he is in who ſtands expoſed by his Crimes to the Divine Vengeance! Dread the invincible thunder of his Wrath! Think what Vengeance is due from God to him who makes his Advantages to do much good, the means to do much evil; who contradicts the end of God in the Gifts that he has beſtowed on him,

and has been only the more wicked, for the Bounty of God towards him; who to gratifie his own wanton and unneceſſary Appetites, has often Offended; what ſevere Puniſhments muſt ſuch a Sinner deſerve? Conſider that this general rule directs you to uſe your Portion with Credit and Comfort, to make your Life as happy in what you have, as that can make it; to improve your Portion to the beſt advantage; It directs to ſuch a courſe as will render your paſſage out of Life eaſie and chearful, attended with a quiet mind, with the applauſes of a good Conſcience, and all your good Actions will then afford you comfortable thoughts and reflections; It directs you ſo to uſe your Portion, as to make your Death as much lamented by others, as welcome to your ſelf, ſo as to embalm your Name, and make your Memory bleſt and praiſed to Poſterity. This rule directs you to ſuch an uſe of your preſent enjoyments, as will be matter of Conſolation to you in the other World, matter of eternal ſatisfaction and joy, when the good deeds which you wrought here, ſhall there be eternally rewarded.

I think then the Reader may eaſily conclude, I have been pleading with him in his own behalf, for himſelf and his own intereſt; I have been urging nothing but what Self-love together with Wiſdom would chuſe: Who would think it ſhould be a Preſumption in me to imagine, that in ſuch a caſe I ſhall prevail with many? can it be a difficult thing to perſwade Men to that which is their own Intereſt? but alas, it does too often prove ſo! Blinded by Luſt and Temptation; men will not ſee their true Intereſt in the cleareſt diſcovery that can be made of it. God alone can effectually open the eyes of men to underſtand that, and incline their Wills to chuſe and purſue it; to him therefore I commit the Reader with this Prayer.

O Thou that art the Father of Lights, and who workeſt in us both to will and to do, according to thy good Pleaſure; grant I beſeech thee, that the mighty power of thy Spirit may attend theſe Inſtructions, and effectually perſwade every perſon that reads them, to receive and practiſe them; do thou teach them to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and to live Godly, Righteouſly, and Soberly in this preſent World: Let theſe Rules be planted in many Hearts, and from thence be abundantly fruitful in good works, to their Happineſs and thy Glory, the great ends of my ambitious but weak endeavours: Grant this, Oh Lord, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour, to whom with the Father and the Spirit be aſcribed Kingdom, Power and Glory for ever: Amen.

FINIS.